

RIVERSIDE LITERATURE SERIES

L'ALLEGRO AND OTHER POEMS

BY
JOHN MILTON

WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
INTRODUCTIONS
AND NOTES



HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & COMPANY
BOSTON, NEW YORK, AND CHICAGO
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

Morang and Co., Ltd., Toronto, are the exclusive
agents for this Series in Canada.

The Riverside Literature Series

Supervising Editor, HORACE E. SCUDDER, 1886-1901

Each regular single number, paper, 15 cents. All prices net postpaid.

1. Longfellow's *Evangeline*.*††
2. Longfellow's *Courtship of Miles Standish*; *Elizabeth*.*
3. Longfellow's *Courtship of Miles Standish*. DRAMATIZED.
4. Whittier's *Snow-Bound*, and Other Poems.*††**
5. Whittier's *Mabel Martin*, and Other Poems.**
6. Holmes's *Grandmother's Story of Bunker Hill Battle*, etc.***
- 7, 8, 9. Hawthorne's *Grandfather's Chair*. In three parts.††
10. Hawthorne's *Biographical Stories*. With Questions.***
11. Longfellow's *Children's Hour*, and Other Poems.**
12. *Studies in Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, and Lowell*.
- 13, 14. Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*. In two parts.†
15. Lowell's *Under the Old Elm*, and Other Poems.**
16. Bayard Taylor's *Lars: a Pastoral of Norway*; and Other Poems.*
- 17, 18. Hawthorne's *Wonder-Book*. In two parts.†
- 19, 20. Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography*. In two parts.†
21. Benjamin Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac*, etc.
- 22, 23. Hawthorne's *Tanglewood Tales*. In two parts.†
24. Washington's *Rules of Conduct, Letters, and Addresses*.*
- 25, 26. Longfellow's *Golden Legend*. In two parts.†
27. Thoreau's *Succession of Forest Trees, Wild Apples, and Sounds*.
With a Biographical Sketch by R. W. EMERSON.††
28. John Burroughs's *Birds and Bees*.*††
29. Hawthorne's *Little Daffydown-dilly*, and Other Stories.***
30. Lowell's *Vision of Sir Launfal*, and Other Poems.*††**
31. Holmes's *My Hunt after the Captain*, and Other Papers.**
32. Abraham Lincoln's *Gettysburg Speech*, etc.**
- 33, 34, 35. Longfellow's *Tales of a Wayside Inn*. In three parts.††
36. John Burroughs's *Sharp Eyes*, and Other Papers.**
37. Charles Dudley Warner's *A-Hunting of the Deer*, etc.*††
38. Longfellow's *Building of the Ship*, and Other Poems.
39. Lowell's *Books and Libraries*, and Other Papers.**
40. Hawthorne's *Tales of the White Hills*, and Sketches.**
41. Whittier's *Tent on the Beach*, and Associated Poems.
42. Emerson's *Fortune of the Republic*. The American Scholar, etc.**
43. Ulysses among the Phæacians. From BRYANT'S Translation of Homer's *Odyssey*.*
44. Edgeworth's *Waste Not, Want Not*; and *The Barring Out*.
45. Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*.*
46. *Old Testament Stories in Scripture Language*.
- 47, 48. *Fables and Folk Stories*. In two parts.†
- 49, 50. Hans Andersen's *Stories*. In two parts.†
- 51, 52. Washington Irving: *Essays from the Sketch Book*. [51] *Rip Van Winkle*, etc. [52] *The Voyage*, etc. In two parts.†
53. Scott's *Lady of the Lake*. ROLFE. (*Double Number, 30 cents. Also, in Rolfe's Students' Series, cloth, to Teachers, 53 cents.*)
54. Bryant's *Sella, Thanatopsis*, and Other Poems.*
55. Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. THURBER.***
56. Webster's *Bunker Hill Monument*; Adams and Jefferson.*
57. Dickens's *Christmas Carol***
58. Dickens's *Cricket on the Hearth***
59. Verse and Prose for Beginners in Reading.*
- 60, 61. The Sir Roger de Coverley Papers. In two parts.†
62. John Fiske's *War of Independence*.§
63. Longfellow's *Paul Revere's Ride*, and Other Poems.**
- 64, 65, 66. Lambs' *Tales from Shakespeare*. In three parts.††
67. Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*.***
68. Goldsmith's *Deserted Village, the Traveller*, and Other Poems.*
69. Hawthorne's *Old Manse*, and a Few Mosses.**
70. A Selection from Whittier's *Child Life in Poetry***
71. A Selection from Whittier's *Child Life in Prose***
72. Milton's *L'Allegro, Il Penseroso, Cornus, Lycidas*, and Sonnets.***
73. Tennyson's *Enoch Arden*, and Other Poems.*

For explanation of signs see end of list.

The Riverside Literature Series

L'ALLEGRO AND OTHER
POEMS

BY

JOHN MILTON

EDITED BY HORACE E. SCUDDER

WITH SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES FOR CARE-
FUL STUDY, BY HENRY W. BOYNTON, M. A.



HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

Boston: 4 Park Street; New York: 85 Fifth Avenue

Chicago: 378-388 Wabash Avenue

The Riverside Press, Cambridge

Copyright, 1895 and 1896,
By HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN & CO.

All rights reserved.

The Riverside Press, Cambridge, Mass., U. S. A.
Electrotyped and Printed by H. O. Houghton and Company.

CONTENTS.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH | 5 |
| ON READING MILTON'S VERSE | 13 |
| L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO | |
| Introductory Note | 18 |
| I. L' Allegro | 19 |
| II. Il Penseroso | 28 |
| COMUS: A MASK | |
| Introductory Note | 38 |
| Comus | 41 |
| LYCIDAS | |
| Introductory Note | 81 |
| Lycidas | 83 |
| SONNETS | |
| I. On his being arrived to the age of twenty-three | 93 |
| II. To the Lord General Fairfax | 93 |
| III. To the Lord General Cromwell | 94 |
| IV. To Sir Henry Vane the Younger | 95 |
| V. On the Late Massacre in Piemont | 95 |
| VI. On his Blindness | 96 |

Joy Lindsay

Her heart.



This blood
was shed from
the thumb of
Joy Lindsay on
Jan. 7, 1906 at
10 P.M.
in witness whereof

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

JOHN MILTON was born in the heart of London, December 9, 1608. His father was born very near the time of Shakespeare's birth, and was a student at Oxford in his youth. It was while he was a student that England was wavering between Catholicism and Protestantism. The poet's grandfather held to the old order, and when his son was found leaning toward the new he disinherited him, and left him to his own devices. Thereupon the student went up to London, and shortly established himself as a scrivener, a term applied to men at that time who were copyists of legal documents, law stationers, and draftsmen also of legal papers. Milton the scrivener prospered, married, and had three children who lived, a daughter and two sons, John Milton being younger than his sister and seven years older than his brother.

Thus the poet came of a father who sympathized with the new order of things, and who was a contemporary of Shakespeare. Shakespeare died when Milton was eight years old, but Milton was nearly thirty when Ben Jonson, who was more widely known than Shakespeare in his day, died, and he was eighteen years old when Bacon died. Milton's youth therefore was contemporaneous with the closing years of the august period of English dramatic poetry, and the glory of the spacious days of the great Queen Elizabeth was still within the near memory of men. He grew up also in a time when there were mutterings

of the rising storm which was to shake England to its centre. He must have heard much in his boyhood of the attempt made by King James to marry his son to a Spanish princess, an heir to the throne of Protestant England, and a daughter of the house which was the stanch defender of the Pope, and the great rival and enemy of England in the days of Elizabeth. He must have been aware also of the widening breach between King and Parliament. He was seventeen years old when Charles I. ascended the throne.

When this took place, Milton had just been entered at Christ's College, Cambridge. His schooldays had been spent in London at St. Paul's school, and he has himself recorded his devotion to books. "My father," he writes, "destined me while yet a little boy for the study of humane letters, which I seized with such eagerness that from the twelfth year of my age I scarcely ever went from my lessons to bed before midnight; which, indeed, was the first cause of injury to my eyes, to whose natural weakness there were also added frequent headaches. All which not retarding my impetuosity in learning, he caused me to be daily instructed both at the grammar-school and under other masters at home; and then, when I had acquired various tongues and also some not insignificant taste for the sweetness of philosophy, he sent me to Cambridge, one of our two national universities."

The great studies in which Milton was nurtured were Latin and Greek. The latter had been generally studied in school only for a generation or so. It was a new study, very much as science is a new study now. Hebrew also was taught, and Milton studied it. Moreover by his father's advice he

learned to read and speak French and Italian, and his best friend at school was Charles Diodati, a young Englishman of Italian descent. But besides his learned studies, Milton was a reader of English poetry. The first folio of Shakespeare's plays was published in 1623, when Milton was fifteen, and it is clear from his own writing that he knew Shakespeare well, but after all Shakespeare was a great dramatist, and Milton was born out of the days when the drama was the great form. The poetry of English origin which he loved best was that of Edmund Spenser, whose *Faerie Queene* was published in 1590. Spenser has sometimes been called the poet's poet. He was Milton's at all events, and when we consider that the body of great English poetry which we know to-day consisted in Milton's time of Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare, and that two of these poets were very modern to him,—for Milton to read Spenser was like our reading Tennyson,—we can see how largely he drew his poetic nourishment from classic literature. Indeed, though scholars did not despise the English tongue, it did not have to them then the value it has now. Bacon wrote his greatest work in Latin so as to be read more generally by scholars, and a considerable body of Milton's poetry is in Latin. When he was nineteen years old he had occasion to engage in a public exercise at college. There had been some Latin speeches, and when they were over, Milton made an address in English verse to his native language which is interesting for showing the profound respect he had for it, and how energetically he desired to put his best thoughts into it, and to use its best form:—

“Not those new-fangled toys, and trimming slight,
Which take our late fantastics with delight,
But call those richest robes, and gay'st attire,
Which deepest spirits, and choicest wits desire.”

In his boyhood Milton had scribbled verses. In college, besides his Latin poems he wrote the *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity*, some verses on the death of his sister Anne's infant child, a sonnet on Shakespeare, the sonnets on the university carrier, Hobson, and a number of other poems which are less read but bear the marks of his fine musical sense, his dignity, and the somewhat overmastering influence of his studies. He gained distinction at the university. He was in favor with the authorities, but unpopular, at first, with his fellow students, who nicknamed him “The Lady,” both for the delicacy of his appearance and for a certain reserve of demeanor. There is a picture extant of the poet at the age of ten. It is described as showing a grave, fair boy with auburn hair, having a neat lace frill and a black braided dress which fitted closely round his chest and arms. He was already called a little poet, and his father took the greatest pride in him and taught him the music which he himself loved and knew well. This home-nurtured boy was the reserved, delicate-minded student, who kept aloof from coarse companionship as he had taken little part in boyish games. He was thought vain by his fellows, and there is no doubt that he did set a high value on his scholarly and poetic tastes. There is another picture of the poet taken at the age of twenty-one and shows him a singularly clear-faced and handsome fellow.

His father evidently intended John Milton to be a priest of the Church of England, but there were two

forces which were at work in the student forbidding this. He was acquiring a certain independence of mind which made him out of sympathy with the growing ecclesiasticism, and he was cherishing a noble ambition to devote himself to high poetry. So, since his father had now retired from business and taken himself to a little village named Horton about seventeen miles west of London, here in the midst of green fields intersected by numberless brooks and small streams, he lived quietly and studiously for half a dozen years. It was during this musing country life in the flush of his opening power that he wrote the minor poems which would have given him a great place in English literature had he never written *Paradise Lost*; for here he wrote the lovely pair of poems, *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, here he penned the playful fancies which gave poetic dignity to festivals, *Arcades* and *Comus*, and here he wrote the elegy *Lycidas*, which rose above a personal lament into the place of a noble burst of patriotism.

The last line of *Lycidas* seems to intimate a design on Milton's part to engage in new poetic enterprises, but if he had such design he laid it aside for a while to carry out a long cherished plan of travel on the continent. In the spring of 1638 he set out by easy stages for Italy and in the fall he was in Florence. With his mind steeped in ancient literature and feeding eagerly on the new Italian literature and art, Milton seems to have had an intellectual feast, and the companionship which he held with the foremost men in the cities he visited was of the same sort which he held with books. He demanded the best, and by his own attainments made himself welcomed by the best. He visited Galileo, then blind and liv-

ing in retirement, and was constantly with men of scholarship and culture. At home he gave himself up to the life of ancient Rome, and he was planning further journeys when news came to him at Naples that turned him homeward.

“While I was desirous,” he says, “to cross into Sicily and Greece, the sad news of civil war coming from England called me back; for I considered it disgraceful that, while my fellow-countrymen were fighting at home for liberty, I should be traveling abroad at ease for intellectual purposes.” The civil war did more than break up Milton’s plans for travel; it changed the whole course of his life as he had laid it out. For twenty years the poet was lost to view in the patriot, the scholar, and the man of public affairs.

For, as already hinted at, Milton had been born into a troubled age, of a family which had taken sides in religion, and the religious contest had become political, so that Puritanism was the sign of protest against kingly monopoly. Milton, with his independent cast of mind and his passionate nature, was in dead earnest and he could not be a mere party follower. He had splendid dreams for England, and all his poetic passion seemed to find vent in pamphlet after pamphlet as he took up one question after another. Some of these questions were social as well as political, and his own unhappy domestic life gave an impulse to some of his reasoning, for his sudden marriage with Mary Powel turned out badly, and though after a separation she came back to him and bore him three daughters, the bitter disappointment gave occasion for much passionate writing on the subject of divorce.

During this stormy period Milton maintained him-

self as a schoolmaster, but gave his energy to his writings. The volume of his prose greatly exceeds that of his poetry, but it is like the editorial work of newspapers, very effective for its purpose at the time when written and published, but quite lost to sight afterward. There are one or two of his books, however, especially the one called *Areopagitica*; or *the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*, which are still read for their noble English and their great thoughts. For the most part, however, his pamphlets were crowded with arguments and invective meant to do execution in the heat of wordy warfare. During the latter part of the period he was Latin Secretary of the Commonwealth under Cromwell; that is, it was his business to translate despatches to and from foreign governments. In the midst of all this clamorous din of public affairs, there came from him those noble spontaneous sonnets which were prompted by the massacre in Piedmont, and by his friendship for Cromwell and Vane.

There is an affecting sonnet also on his blindness, for in 1652, when he was forty-three years old, a gradual failing of sight had ended in total blindness. Thus when the end of his hopes for England seemed to have come and the kingdom was restored in 1660, Milton was a poor, blind man, driven into obscurity by the incoming to power of those he had opposed all his life. How strongly he felt all this is seen in his dramatic piece *Samson Agonistes*.

For a while Milton was in hiding and he was forced to give up much of what property he had. He lost besides by fire, but though poor in worldly goods and blind, his mind to him a kingdom was, and so, bidding good-by to courts and the whirl of public life, he re-

turned to a scholar's ways. The stream which had been diverted returned to the channel of poetry, and the story of his last years is the story of writing *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. He listened to readers and he dictated his poems. In his youth he had pondered over large schemes of verse. Now in his old age, after taking part in a revolution which had been set in motion by love of liberty and a deep religious earnestness, he took the great theme of the human race in its relation to God. The largeness of the poet's ideal, a largeness which had been before him all his life, finds expression in this great epic, just as the beauty which he loved finds expression in the group of poems printed in this little collection.

Milton died November 8, 1674.

ON READING MILTON'S VERSE.

THE text of the long poems included in this volume follows the edition of 1645 with occasional variations suggested by the edition of 1673. By the end of 1652 Milton had become totally blind, and the earlier edition therefore could be the only one which would have the benefit of his eyesight in the preparation of copy and the correction of proof. This is an important consideration, for no one can give the most casual attention to Milton's writings, especially to his verse, without perceiving the scholarly delight which he took in all the niceties of his art.

It becomes then of great moment in reading Milton to have his verse just as he left it, and it is fortunate that the shorter poems here printed all appeared in the fresh strength of Milton's young manhood. At a superficial view, it is of no consequence whether we read *L'Allegro* in a text which is modernized, or in a text which scrupulously follows Milton's own. Indeed it might be argued that a listener would be better off if the reader had the aid of the more familiar form, inasmuch as there would be fewer obstacles for the eye to overcome. But a closer inspection will reveal the advantage which accrues to the slightly archaic form here given.

Milton, as a scholar, was one of the arbiters of orthography. The time had not come when dictionary makers and printers fixed the exact form. Consequently he varied the spelling of the same word

according to the demands of rhythm or even of rhyme to the eye. If he wished the accent to fall lightly on *their*, he spelled it *thir*. If he wrote a line,

“Com, but keep thy wonted state,”

he allowed himself to spell the rhyme-making word of the next line in the same way,

“With eev’n step, and musing gate.”

The instances of each sort are many and very interesting to trace. The line just quoted affords another example of his delicate ear. He spelled *even* in a way to show the length of the first syllable and the elision in the second. The reader will perceive repeatedly how nicely Milton distinguishes by typographic marks between syllables dropped and syllables sounded, and how carefully he indicates the *t* and the *d* sounds in past participles. The student of these poems will constantly be delighted by these evidences of Milton’s punctilious care.

There are other forms of spelling, which are interesting in an historical way. When one sees that Milton wrote *Plowman*, and *center*, and *savory*, it sets him reflecting that the orthography which is so strongly contested is not the innovation of an imperfectly trained lexicographer, and that the usage of a few generations of London writers does not necessarily determine the best usage of to-day. These and similar points of study and observation, which are sometimes referred to explicitly in the notes and sometimes left for the student to discover to his own pleasure, afford an admirable secondary pursuit in the reading of Milton. Those who read this book for the first time will not be persons unacquainted with the ordinary forms of English, and what they meet

here, therefore, will not serve to undermine their confidence in the accepted spelling of the day; but they will be, for the most part, students ready for an introduction to one of the most pregnant subjects for intellectual excitement, the study of words, and the slight variation from regular orthography will suggest many interesting excursions in language. It would be hard to find a book better calculated to initiate the student in a course of lexical inquiry than a collection of Milton's minor verse printed just as he intended it to be printed; the student will have opportunity then to ask, Is this a form which Milton deliberately chose, or is it the common form of language in the time of Milton? and the answer in each case is likely to afford him great interest.

We have said that this study of words is a secondary pursuit. It is a great gain both to teacher and pupil to have such a secondary pursuit when reading the works of a great author. But the primary study of Milton supplies another reason for using a text which follows his own edition. We have hinted at it in referring to Milton's delicate ear. "Angelic," De Quincey calls it, and he adds: "Many are the *prima facie* anomalous lines in Milton; many are the suspicious lines, which in many a book I have seen many a critic peering into, with eyes made up for mischief, yet with a misgiving that all was not quite safe, very much like an old raven looking down a marrow bone. In fact, such is the metrical skill of the man, and such the perfection of his metrical sensibility, that, on any attempt to take liberties with a passage of his, you feel as when coming in a forest, upon what seems a dead lion; perhaps he

may *not* be dead ; nay, perhaps he may *not* be sleeping, but only shamming. And you have a jealousy, as to Milton, even in the most flagrant case of almost palpable error, that after all there may be a plot in it. You may be put down with shame by some man reading the line otherwise, reading it with a different emphasis, a different cæsura, or perhaps a different suspension of the voice, so as to bring out a new and self-justifying effect.”¹ And De Quincey gives an illustration of the singular enrichment of a line by proper reading when he takes a line from *Samson Agonistes*,

“ Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
Eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves,”

and punctuates it thus, following Landor’s suggestion,

“ Eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill, with slaves.”

“ And why ? ” he asks ; “ because thus ‘ the grief of Samson is aggravated at every member of the sentence.’ He (like Milton) was (1) blind ; (2) in a city of triumphant enemies ; (3) working for daily bread ; (4) herding with slaves, — Samson literally, and Milton with those whom he regarded as such.”

The appeal which great poetry makes is through its splendid music. No comment on *L’Allegro* for example, no analysis of its contents, is such an interpretation as a beautiful reading aloud of its lovely measures. What would we not give if we could have a phonographic repetition of Milton’s own recital ! In the absence of that we come most closely to Milton’s voice when we read attentively as he has bidden us read, by his fine distinctions in accent, in length

¹ *Milton* vs. *Southey* and *Landor*. Volume IV. of *The Works of Thomas De Quincey*.

of syllables, in pauses, in the slurring of notes or in sharp staccato speech, in punctuation, in elision. These refinements of reading are very greatly helped by the reading of his text as he meant people should read it.

Nevertheless, it is undesirable that in making a first acquaintance with Milton we should be embarrassed by obstacles which do not add either to the music or the meaning of his verse. The fashion of capitalization, for example, is only a fashion, and therefore no attempt has been made to copy the edition of 1645 in this respect. Again the use of the apostrophe to mark the possessive case was very irregular in Milton's time; nothing is gained by a departure from the customary regular usage of the present time. Punctuation also is simply an aid to clear reading, and an unaccustomed method is confusing, not helpful. Finally, there are words whose variation in spelling from that now current is rather curious than significant, and it has been thought better to spell these in the customary form rather than to puzzle the reader with unfamiliar and perhaps misleading forms. The present text, therefore, while a *verbatim* is not a *literatim* copy of that of 1643.

L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

THE titles of these two poems intimate their contrasted character. Milton was deep in his Italian studies when he wrote of *The Joyous Man* and *The Pensive One*, as the titles may freely be rendered. The balance of parts is preserved and in the notes will occasionally be found specific reminders, but it is more in accordance with the spirit of the interpretation of poetry to look for the contrasts in masses and in broad counterparts. The scheme, indeed, is slightly artificial, and it may be guessed that Milton with his reflecting nature should have written the second of the poems first, at any rate that he should have given himself to its composition more freely. The two poems are indeed like two pieces of music, one in a major, the other in the minor key, and poetry is apt to find in the minor key a wider range of expression. It would be a good exercise to work out the parallel and contrast which underlie the two poems. It should never be lost out of sight in reading them that they are not descriptive verses, but poems in which nature and human nature alike are seen under

“The light that never was, on sea or land;
The consecration, and the Poet's dream.”

Some admirable remarks on this matter may be found in the introduction by Mark Pattison to the selection of Milton's poems printed in Ward's *The English Poets*. Both poems appear to have been written between 1632 and 1638.

I

L' ALLEGRO.

*famille morte
prochain*

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,

Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,

In Stygian cave forlorn,

'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights
unholy!

6 Find out some uncouth cell,

Where brooding darknes spreads his jealous
wings,

And the night-raven sings;

There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks,

As ragged as thy locks,

10 In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.

But come, thou Goddess fair and free,

In heav'n yclep'd Euphrosyne,

And by men, heart-easing Mirth,

Whom lovely Venus at a birth

15 With two sister Graces more

To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore;

2. So natural is this parentage, that at first one is half-disposed to think this was an ancient myth instead of an invention of Milton's. But a moment's reflection upon the word in its origin, for in Greek "melancholy" is "black bile," reminds one how readily the ancients resolved mental disorder into physical ail.

8. Low-brow'd = overhanging.

14. At ■ birth. As we say one at a time; so here, it is equivalent to three at one birth.

15. The two sister Graces are Aglaia (Brightness) and Thalia (Bloom).

Or whether (as som sager sing)
 The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
 Zephyr with Aurora playing,
 20 As he met her once a-Maying,
 There on beds of violets blew,
 And fresh-blown roses washt in dew,
 Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
 So buxom, blith, and debonair.
 25 Haste thee, nymph, and bring with thee
 Jest and youthful Jollity,
 Quips, and Cranks, and wanton Wiles,
 Nods, and Becks, and wreathed Smiles,
 Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
 30 And love to live in dimple sleek;
 Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
 And Laughter holding both his sides.
 Come, and trip it as ye go
 On the light fantastic toe,

21. **Blew** = blue. This is one of Milton's eye-rhymes.

24. **Blith**. It appears as if Milton wished to touch the word lightly, with the short *i*. See line 65, where he adds the customary *e*.

28. **Wreathed Smiles**. The fundamental sense of wreath is a twist, but its association with flowers and clouds seems for the most part to have relieved it from the notion of pain which attaches to its other form *writhe*, and here, therefore, wreathed Smiles is offset against wrinkled Care.

33. **Come**. Milton writes it here and throughout the poem, *com*, apparently to shorten the sound, and make it more beckoning by omitting the final *e*, but we always pronounce it thus.

Trip it. From a poetic and literary use, such a form has fallen almost exclusively into colloquial use. We should hardly expect to find "go it," for example, in a piece of literature, though in a few phrases, as "lord it," literature still avails itself of the form. See, for this line and the next, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, Act IV. sc. i., line 46.

- 35 And in thy right hand lead with thee
 The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
 And if I give thee honor due,
 Mirth, admit me of thy crue,
 To live with her, and live with thee,
 40 In unreproved pleasures free;
 To hear the lark begin his flight,
 And singing startle the dull night,
 From his watch-towre in the skies,
 Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
 45 Then to come in spite of sorrow,
 And at my window bid good morrow,
 Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
 Or the twisted eglantine:
 While the cock, with lively din,
 50 Scatters the rear of darknes thin,
 And to the stack, or the barn door,
 Stoutly struts his dames before:
 Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
 Cheerly rouse the slumbring morn,

36. One frequently finds in Milton, in consequence of his lofty spirit, touched with large visions of political and religious life, passages which seem very modern and familiar, as in this association of freedom with the mountains, which is a note heard most frequently in poetry from Wordsworth down.

38. *Crue*, i. e. *crew*. In Milton's time the simple sense of ■ gathering, a crowd, prevailed in the use of this word, though the contemptuous intonation also occasionally was heard.

43. *Towre*. See the same word made a dissyllable in line 77.

45. *To come*. More fully this would be "to see him come," as before Milton wrote "to hear the lark begin."

In spite of sorrow = to spite sorrow.

52. *Struts* is not a transitive verb. The action is completed in the previous line. So in this line the preposition is made ■ postposition.

- 55 From the side of som hoar hill,
 Through the high wood echoing shrill:
 Some time walking, not unseen,
 By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
 Right against the eastern gate,
 ■ Wher' the great sun begins his state,
 Rob'd in flames, and amber light,
 The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
 While the plowman near at hand
 Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
 ■ And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
 And the mower whets his scythe,
 And every shepherd tells his tale
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.
 Strait mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
 70 Whilst the lantskip round it measures:
 Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
 Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
 Mountains on whose barren breast
 The labouring clouds do often rest:

55. **Hoar** = white with frost. Observe the difference in spelling of *some* in this line and the second following.

67. **Tells his tale** = keeps his tally. We still use the word tell with this meaning in the phrase "to tell off." Tale is closely allied to tally.

68. See Goldsmith's *The Deserted Village*, line 13.

69. **Strait** = straightway.

70. **Lantskip**. So Milton spelled *landscape*. The usual form was *landskip*.

71. **Lawn** had not in Milton's time the exclusive significance of level open space about a dwelling. It was simply any open grassy place and here means pasture.

Fallow again means here grassy, overgrown, neglected tilage. The colors which Milton assigns are rather the dull colors of browsing ground than nicely discriminated hues of different earths.

- 75 Meadows trim with daisies pied,
 Shallow brooks, and rivers wide.
 Towers, and battlements it sees
 Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
 Wher perhaps som beauty lies,
 80 The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
 Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes,
 From betwixt two aged oaks,
 Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
 Are at their savory dinner set
 85 Of hearbs, and other country messes,
 Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses ;
 And then in haste her bowre she leaves,
 With Thestylis to bind the sheaves ;
 Or, if the earlier season lead,
 90 To the tann'd haycock in the mead.
 Sometimes with secure delight
 The up-land hamlets will invite,
 When the merry bells ring round,
 And the jocund rebecks sound
 95 To many a youth, and many a maid,

75. **Pied.** Milton wrote *pide*, as above he wrote *brest*.

78. We are more familiar with the meaning of **bosom'd** here when it takes the form "embosomed."

79. **Lies** = dwells.

82. **Okes.** A familiar form for *oaks* in Milton's day.

85. **Hearbs.** This spelling shows the pronunciation which our ancestors, following that form, corrupted into *yarbs*.

88. Both Phyllis and Thestylis are rustic maidens in classic poetry, and so adopted by Milton, as he had already used the names of Thyrsis and Corydon.

91. **Secure** has here its first derivative meaning, *sine cura*, free from care.

92. **Up-land** = inland or country, rather than necessarily high ground.

- Dancing in the chequer'd shade ;
 And young and old come forth to play
 On a sunshine holyday,
 Till the live-long day-light fail.
- 100 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
 With stories told of many a feat,
 How faery Mab the junkets eat,
 She was pincht and pull'd, she said,
 And he, by friar's lanthorn led,
- 105 Tells how the drudging goblin swet,
 To earn his cream-bowle duly set,
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn
 That ten day-labourers could not end ;
- 110 Then lies him down the lubbar-fend,

96. **Chequer'd.** Shakespeare, in *Titus Andronicus*, II. iii. 14, 15, happily defines this word : —

“ The green leaves quiver with the cooling wind
 And make a chequer'd shadow on the ground.”

102. Here, as so often, Milton reminds us of his familiarity with Shakespeare. See *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II. i.

103. **Said.** That Milton wrote *sed* seems to show that there was a choice of pronunciations, *sade* or *sed*.

104. **And he.** In the liveliness of the scene Milton is indifferent to a nice discrimination of persons. There is a jumble of male and female voices. A maid servant says she was “pincht and pull'd.” In breaks a man servant with his story, how he was misled by a will-o'-the-wisp. Another still, it may be, tells how Robin Goodfellow toiled. The Norwegians have the same story of a goblin, and peasants still set out bowls of porridge for him.

108. **Hath.** Hales asserts that Milton does not use the form *has*.

109. **End** = make an end of.

110. **Lubbar-fend.** We should write lubber-fiend. Mrs. Ewing has a pretty tale, of *Lob Lie-by-the-Fire*. The old word *Lob* still lingers in New England in *Lob Lane* in the country.

- And stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength ;
 And crop-ful out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
- 115 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
 By whispering windes soon lull'd asleep.
 Towred cities please us then,
 And the busie humm of men,
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold
- 120 In weeds of peace high triumphs hold,
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence, and judge the prize
 Of wit, or arms, while both contend
 To win her grace whom all commend.
- 125 There let Hymen oft appear
 In saffron robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp, and feast, and revelry,

Indeed it is to be suspected that many a love-lane is a modernization of this old form.

117. The force of *then* will be understood better if it is read as the first word in the line. It does not point to the time of the preceding line, but is a word of transition.

118. *Humm*. The duplication of the *m* increases the sound-effect.

120. *Weeds* = garments. The word in this significance is used now only of mourning garments. For the phrase "weeds of peace" see *Troilus and Cressida*, Act III. sc. iii. l. 239.

122. Milton wrote *eies*, a common form, and *prise*.

125. As masques, which will be treated later in *Comus*, were often pageants in connection with the marriage festivities of the nobility, the figure of Hymen was a frequent one. Mr. Hales quotes here from Ben Jonson's *Hymenæi or the Solemnities of Masque and Barrier at a Marriage*: "Entered Hymen . . . in a saffron-colored robe, his under vestures white, his socks yellow, a yellow veil of silk on his left arm, his head crowned with roses and marjoram, in his right hand a torch of pine-tree."

- With mask, and antique pageantry :
 Such sights as youthfull poets dream
 130 On summer eves by haunted stream.
 Then to the well-trod stage anon,
 If Jonson's learned sock be on,
 Or sweetest Shakespeare, fancy's child,
 Warble his native wood-notes wild.
 135 And ever, against eating cares,
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
 Married to immortal verse,
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
 In notes with many a winding bout
 140 Of linked sweetness long drawn out
 With wanton heed, and giddy cunning,
 The melting voice through mazes running;
 Untwisting all the chains that ty
 The hidden soul of harmony ;
 145 That Orpheus' self may heave his head
 From golden slumber on a bed

132. Milton himself, a lover of learning, emphasizes the distinction which was common in his day between Ben Jonson, who wrote with the classics always in his thought, and was the correct, regular dramatist of the day, and Shakespeare, whose free, unrestrained manner delighted Milton, though he set him down as not in the succession of classic poets.

135. **Eating cares** is an exact translation of a passage in Horace ; but the Biblical phrase "the zeal of thy house hath eaten me up" is a similar use.

136. **Lydian airs** were soft and voluptuous.

138. **Pierce**. The rhyme shows how this word was pronounced by Milton. Now and then one hears the pronunciation as an old-fashioned one, but it is not infrequently so sounded as a proper name.

145. **Heave** was not in Milton's time, as now, so associated with the idea *heavy*. It was simply to raise, and not necessarily to raise an anchor.

Of heapt Elysian flowres, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
150 His half regain'd Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.)

II.

IL PENNEROSO.

- HENCE, vain deluding joys,
The brood of folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys;
■ Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sunbeams,
Or likest hovering dreams,
10 The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou goddess sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
15 And therefore to our weaker view,
O'erlaid with black, staid wisdom's hue.
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
20 To set her beauty's praise above

2. That is, vain deluding joys which are due to folly alone.

6. Fond = foolish.

19. Starr'd Ethiop queen. Cassiopeia, fabled to have been made a constellation.

20. The story runs that she boasted of her beauty above that of the Nereids, and for punishment was made, when among the stars, to be turning backward.

- The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended.
 Yet thou art higher far descended :
 Thee bright-hair'd Vesta, long of yore,
 To solitary Saturn bore ;
- 25 His daughter she (in Saturn's reign,
 Such mixture was not held ■ stain)
 Oft in glimmering bowres and glades
 He met her, and in secret shades
 Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
- While yet there was no fear of Jove.
 Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
 Sober, steadfast, and demure,
 All in a robe of darkest grain,
 Flowing with majestic train,
- And sable stole of cypress lawn,
 Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
 Come, but keep thy wonted state,
 With eev'n step, and musing gait,
 And looks commercing with the skies,
- 40 Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes :
 There held in holy passion still,
 Forget thy self to marble, till
 With a sad leaden downward cast,
 Thou fix them on the earth as fast.

22. **Higher** = more highly.

23. **Vesta** was the goddess of the hearth, and the fitness of the parentage, which is of Milton's devising, steals out of the lines that follow.

30. **Yet** = as yet.

33. **All**. So "all on a summer's day." Milton uses **grain** for Tyrian purple.

35. **Cypress lawn** = **cypress lawn** = black crape. See **Autolycus'** song in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, Act IV. sc. iv.

36. **Decent** = comely.

41. **Still** is an adjective.

- 45 And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
 Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
 And hears the Muses in a ring
 Aye round about Jove's altar sing.
 And add to these retired Leisure,
 ■ That in trim gardens takes his pleasure;
 But, first and chiefest, with thee bring
 Him that yon soars on golden wing,
 Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
 The cherub Contemplation;
 55 And the mute Silence hist along,
 'Less Philomel will deign a song,
 In her sweetest, saddest plight,
 Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
 While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
 60 Gently o'er th' accustom'd oak;
 Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
 Most musicall, most melancholy!
 Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among,
 I woo to hear thy even-song;

49. **Leisure.** Milton wrote this *leasure*.

53. Milton knew his Bible, especially the Old Testament, well. See Ezekiel, chapter x.

54. **Contemplation** has five syllables. The ending *ion* is commonly dissyllabic in Shakespeare.

55. **Hist.** A curious use of the word. Hales says it is equivalent to "bring silently along." Is it not possible that Milton, having adjured Melancholy to come as his companion, and to bring for other company Peace, Quiet, spare Fast, and retired Leisure, but above all the cherub Contemplation, treats Silence itself as ■ dumb dog, and so uses the word which would apply to the ordering of ■ dog, — 'st Silence!

61. **Noise** is not necessarily disagreeable sound in Milton.

64. **Even-song.** Milton uses here an ecclesiastical phrase in familiar use then, just as in *L'Allegro*, l. 114, he refers to the matin of the cock. This is one of the distinctly contrasted points in the two poems.

65 And, missing thee, I walk unseen
 On the dry smooth-shaven green,
 To behold the wand'ring moon,
 Riding near her highest noon,
 Like one that had been led astray
 70 Through the heav'n's wide pathles way;
 And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
 Oft on a plat of rising ground,
 I hear the far-off curfeu sound,
 75 Over som wide-water'd shore,
 Swinging slow with sullen roar;
 Or, if the air will not permit,
 Som still removed place will fit,
 Where glowing embers through the room
 80 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
 Far from all resort of mirth,
 Save the cricket on the hearth,
 Or the belman's drowsy charm
 To bless the doors from nightly harm;)

65. **Unseen.** See *L'Allegro*, l. 57.

68. **Noon.** The night in this poem is the full period, and the noon of the moon corresponds thus to midnight.

69. **Been.** Milton wrote *bin* as giving the sound better.

74. **Curfeu.** Milton's spelling of the word indicates more explicitly than the modern form its origin.

77. That is, if the weather forbids this out-door consorting with Melancholy, then some quiet room will serve.

80. This line readily suggests the lines in *Paradise Lost*, l. 61-64.

"A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
 As one great furnace, flam'd; yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible
 Serv'd only to discover sights of woe."

84. **Nightly** = in the night time.

- Or let my lamp at midnight hour
 Be seen in som high lonely towr,
 Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
 With thrice-great Hermes, or unspear
 The spirit of Plato, to unfold
- 90 What worlds, or what vast regions hold
 The immortal mind that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook :
 And of those dæmons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
- Whose power hath a true consent
 With planet, or with element.
 Somtime let gorgeous tragedy
 In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebs, or Pelops' line,
- 100 Or the tale of Troy divine.
 Or what (though rare) of later age

88. **Thrice-great Hermes** = Hermes Trismegistus. **Un-spear**. The implication of the word is that the spirit of Plato is dwelling in a sphere apart from this world ; to unsphere the spirit, therefore, is to bring him out of that sphere down to the world, where he may disclose the secret of immortality. It is probable that either of two sounds was allowable, just as now we say, as we may prefer in poetry, *wind* or *wînd*, and that Milton rhymes *unspear* with *bear*.

96. When Milton wrote, astrology and astronomy, like alchemy and chemistry, were still terms almost interchangeable.

98. **Scepter'd pall**, that is, in robes worn by a king bearing ■ sceptre.

99. **Thebs** = Thebes.

100. These three were the great subjects of Greek tragedy.

101. **Though rare**. These words in parenthesis seem to intimate the critical attitude which Milton took toward the English drama. He was writing when the great Elizabethan period had closed and popular taste was turning to other than Shakespeare's plays.

- Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
 But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
 Might raise Musæus from his bower,
 ■ Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
 Such notes as, warbled to the string,
 Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
 And made Hell grant what Love did seek.
 Or call up him that left half told
 110 The story of Cambuscan bold,
 Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
 And who had Canace to wife,
 That own'd the vertuous ring and glass,
 And of the wondrous horse of brass,
 115 On which the Tartar king did ride ;
 And if aught else great bards beside
 In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
 Of turneys, and of trophies hung ;
 Of forests, and enchantments drear,
 120 Where more is meant then meets the ear.

106. **Warbled.** A comma placed before this word would show at once its grammatical place.

109. **Him.** Chaucer.

110. **Cambuscan** = Cambres-Khan. Chaucer, who writes the word Cambyusean, throws the accent on the first syllable.

112. The names Camballo, Algarsyf, and Canace all occur in the story as Chaucer tells it. See *The Squire's Tale*.

113. **Vertuous** = possessing power. When the revisers of the New Testament came to Mark vi. 30, and read, "And Jesus, immediately knowing in himself that virtue had gone out of him," they saw that the old English sense had disappeared from common use, and they made it to read "And straightway Jesus, perceiving in himself that the power *proceeding* from him had gone forth."

120. This is especially true of Spenser's great allegory of *The Faerie Queene*, which Milton no doubt had in mind, as well as the poems of Ariosto, Tasso, and other Italian romantic

- Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
 Till Civil-suited Morn appear,
 Not trickt and frounted as she was wont
 With the Attick boy to hunt,
 125 But *cherchef't* in a comely cloud,
 While rocking winds are piping loud,
 Or usher'd with a shower still,
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the russling leaves,
 130 With minute drops from off the eaves.
 And when the sun begins to fling
 His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
 To arched walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown that Sylvan loves
 135 Of pine, or monumental oak,
 Where the rude ax with heaved stroke
 Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
 There in close covert by som brook,

writers with whom he was very familiar. The use of *then* for *than* shows the derivation of the latter form.

122. Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, iii. 2 :—

“Come, civil night,
 Thou sober-suited matron, all in black.”

The use of suit for clothing is common enough now. In *L'Allegro*, morn was decked out showily.

124. **Attick boy.** In Ovid's story, Aurora or the Dawn was in love with Cephalus and went out hunting with him.

125. **Cherchef't.** The word survives in the second part of handkerchief. Its formation is similar to that of *curfeu*. We now write *kerchief'd*.

134. **Sylvan** = *Sylvanus*, or Pan, the woody god.

135. **Monumental.** Another favorite word applied by poets to majestic trees is *immemorial*.

- 140 Where no profaner eye may look,
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with honied thigh,
 That at her flowry work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring,
 145 With such consort as they keep,
 Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep;
 And let som strange mysterious dream,
 Wave at his wings, in airy stream
 Of lively portraiture display'd,
 150 Softly on my eye-lids laid.
 And as I wake, sweet music breath
 Above, about or underneath,
 Sent by som spirit to mortals good,
 Or th' unseen Genius of the wood.
 155 But let my due feet never fail

140. "Profaner = somewhat, or at all profane = profanish, if there were such a word. Such is frequently the force in Latin also of what is called the comparative degree : thus senior = somewhat old, elderly." HALES.

145. Consort = harmony.

150. The four lines closing with this are somewhat perplexing, chiefly because of the insertion of *at* in the phrase "wave at his wings." The most reasonable interpretation appears to be that which understands a reflection in the airy stream; the dream hovering over the airy stream sees below his winged movement repeated, and as in Wordsworth, we see —

"The swan on still St. Mary's Lake
 Float double, swan and shadow," —

so here the sleeper's imagination describes the double image.

151. *Breath*, i. e. breathe, the hope being expressed that sweet music may breathe, as the sleeper wakes; the word should rhyme with the last one in the following line.

To walk the studious cloister's pale,
 And love the high embowed roof,
 With anticke pillars massy proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 160 Casting a dimm religious light.
 There let the pealing organ blow,
 To the full voic'd Quire below,
 In service high, and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetnes, through mine ear,
 165 Dissolve me into ecstasies,
 And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes.)
 And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peacefull hermitage,
 The hairy gown and mossy cell,
 170 Where I may sit and rightly spell
 Of every star that heav'n doth shew,
 And every herb that sips the dew ;
 Till old experience do attain

156. **Studious cloister's pale**, i. e. to walk a cloistered inclosure devoted to study and learning. We use the phrase "without the pale of the church," and the word reappears in palings, fences, that is, marking the pale or inclosure.

157. It has been well said by Mr. Hales that "Milton was one of the latest true lovers of Gothic architecture when the taste for it was declining, as Gray was one of the earliest when the taste was reviving."

158. **Anticke**. If one compares this word with its exact correlative here, *antique*, he will observe a singular evolution in use. **Massy** = massive; **proof** = able to bear the great weight resting on the pillars.

159. **Storied windows**. Is Milton here referring to windows containing scenes and persons depicted on them, or to windows in the clerestory of the church ?

162. It is comparatively in recent times that **quire** has become *choir*.

164. **As** = such as.

To something like prophetic strain.

175 These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

174. **Prophetic.** Milton's use of the word was undoubtedly that of his generation ; the prophet was to be a seer, rather than a foreteller of events.

COMUS: A MASK.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

WHAT is a mask? To find the best illustration we must go to the great period of the English drama. While Shakespeare's plays were being given with very little scenery and with nothing of that gorgeousness of apparatus which now makes a great spectacle, when for instance Henry Irving puts Henry the Eighth on the stage, Ben Jonson was producing masks which brought into requisition the genius of a great architect like Inigo Jones, who built splendid palaces and arches of pasteboard for the representation of these pageants. Moreover, though plays were given sometimes at court, they were then as now popular entertainments to which one could go on paying the price of admission; whereas masks were more in the nature of private theatricals; they were entertainments of a social nature, produced with much elaborateness of scenery, dress, music, and dancing, in honor of some high event, ■ ■ marriage, a birthday, or the visit of a royal personage.

The mask was in its composition more akin to the opera than to the play, and perhaps still more like the modern spectacle than either. It was less a representation of life on a small scale than an allegorical picture. In Bacon's *Essays* there is one entitled *Of Masques and Triumphs*, which lets one into something of the secret of the attraction which these pageants had for men of learning and imagination.

When one considers what a great poem Edmund Spenser built on an allegorical basis in the *Faerie Queene*, it is not difficult to see how heartily nobles and scholars and poets and artists would enter into the production of one of these masks where poetic representations could make use of supernatural figures, and tableaux could be devised which would give opportunity for rich dresses and beautiful faces to stand for some poetic conceit. It was an exuberant age, and the wealth of the new discoveries in Grecian and Roman civilization was eagerly made use of by poets and dramatists, who appealed by means of it to the eye and the ear as well as to the mind.

The simple meaning of the word "mask" readily suggests the chief element; disguise played a very important part, and when we are reading one of Ben Jonson's masks we are at a great disadvantage, for it was not so much what was spoken as the appearance of the figures speaking which interested the original attendants on the mask. The pale page of the book, with the most elaborate description, is a poor equivalent for that gorgeous pageant, swelling with pomp and poetic splendor, where poet and architect blended their labor and laid under contribution the ancient world and the world of myth for the building of their vast pasteboard palace of beauty. We catch a glimpse of the brilliant display as we read, and we see that Jonson's learning and poetic fancy made him easily chief in this temporary kingdom of art and letters, as Shakespeare was chief in the dramatic kingdom. Fortunately for us, Shakespeare was building with permanent materials of art; unfortunately for us and for Jonson's fame, we are able only to drag forth from the débris of those spectacles which

delighted London, the court, and the great country-seats, snatches of song and graceful addresses, independent of the setting in which they were placed.

By and by the mask declined in popularity. The decline was due in part to the gradual indifference of the titled classes to what may be termed poetic splendor, as the great period of national romance subsided, in part to the rise of the Puritan party which beginning in a protest against ecclesiastical authority, raised its head against the state which was allied with the church and broadened its scope to take in all forms of literature and art which seemed to conflict with a severe ideal of life. The theatre, falling under the ban of the Puritans, became for awhile a reflection of a loose society, and as the court became more profligate it cared less for the somewhat fantastic graces of the mask.

It is interesting to observe therefore the sudden glow of the dying mask under the touch of the young poet who was to be the great Puritan scholar and poet. *Comus* was written to accompany a musical composition by Henry Lawes, and was performed out-of-doors by amateurs at an entertainment given by the Earl of Bridgewater to celebrate his entrance into his office as Lord President of Wales. The story runs that Lord Brackley, Mr. Thomas Egerton, and their sister Lady Alice once were benighted in Haywood Forest when making a journey to some relatives, and that Milton based his mask on the incident, but it is quite possible that the poem, whose plot could easily have been invented, gave rise to the story. Milton never gave the name of *Comus* to the piece, but called it simply *A Masque presented at Ludlow Castle*.

COMUS.

THE PERSONS.

The attendant SPIRIT, afterwards in the habit of THYESIS.
COMUS, with his crew.

The LADY.

First BROTHER.

Second BROTHER.

SABRINA, the Nymph.

The chief persons which presented were,

The Lord BRACKLY.

Mr. THOMAS EGERTON, his brother.

The Lady ALICE EGERTON.

THE FIRST SCENE DISCOVERS A WELD WOOD.

The attendant SPIRIT descends or enters.

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's Court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright ærial spirits live inspher'd
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
6 Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call Earth, and with low-thoughted care
Confin'd, and pester'd in this pin-fold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindfull of the crown that virtue gives,

4. **Serene.** To be read sēr'ene. According to the usage of Milton's time many words were accented upon the first syllable which are now accented upon the second. See, for example, *énthron'd* (line 11), *pérplex't* (37), *cómplete* (421), *cóngéal'd* (449).

7. Although *pester'd* had for its common meaning in Milton's time the sense "crowded," the use of *pinfold* suggests the possibility that Milton had in his mind the original force of "*pester*," as applied to the hobbling of animals.

10 After this mortal change, to her true servants
 Amongst the enthron'd Gods on sainted seats.
 Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
 To lay their just hands on that golden key
 That opes the palace of eternity ;

15 To such my errand is, and, but for such,
 I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
 With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.

But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
 Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
 20 Took in, by lot 'twixt high and neather Jove,
 Imperial rule of all the Sea-girt isles,
 That like to rich and various gems inlay
 The unadorned boosom of the Deep ;
 Which he to grace his tributary Gods
 25 By course commits to severall government,
 And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns
 And wield their little tridents : but this Isle,
 The greatest and the best of all the main,
 He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities ;
 30 And all this tract that fronts the falling sun

16. **Weeds.** See *L'Allegro*, line 120.

17. **Mould** = earthly material.

20. **High Jove** = Jupiter. **Neather** = *Nether Jove* = Pluto.
 For the form *neather* notice *beneath*.

23. **Unadorned.** When Milton does not wish to sound the
 ■ in *ed* he puts an elision mark ('), in place of the letter.

24. **Grace.** We all recognize the sense in which this word
 is used here, when we employ its negative form and speak of
 disgracing, i. e. degrading an officer.

25. **Severall**, in its distributive use.

27. Neptune as supreme ocean deity wields his great trident.

29. **Blue-hair'd deities** = nereids. Here Milton has trans-
 lated ■ Greek epithet.

30. The occasion of the mask explains what this tract, peer,
 and nation are.

A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
 Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
 An old and haughty nation, proud in arms :
 Where his fair off-spring, nurs't in princely lore,
 35 Are coming to attend their father's state,
 And new-intrusted scepter. But their way
 Lies through the perplex't paths of this drear wood,
 The nodding horror of whose shady brows
 Threats the forlorn and wandring passinger.
 40 And here their tender age might suffer peril,
 But that by quick command from Soveran Jove
 I was dispatcht for their defence, and guard ;
 And listen why, for I will tell you now
 What never yet was heard in tale or song,
 ' 45 From old or modern bard, in hall or bowr.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
 Crush't the sweet poison of mis-used wine,
 After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
 Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
 50 On Circe's island fell : (who knows not Circe,
 The daughter of the Sun? whose charmed cup
 Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,

35. **State.** They had come to attend the ceremony of their father's installation.

37. See note on line 4.

39. **Passinger.** So Milton, and the form carries justification.

48. Legend relates that Bacchus transformed into dolphins certain Tuscan or Tyrrhene pirates who had kidnapped him.

52. The Comus of Milton is really as here given a modern addition to ancient mythology. In Classic Greek, Comus was first the word for merry-making and then for a band of revelers ; the word Comedy is closely connected with it. In later mythology, Comus was the divinity of merry-making, but it remained for Milton to add his parentage, and by his poetic power to give him a life such as antiquity had not given him.

And downward fell into ■ groveling swine)
 This Nymph that gaz'd upon his clustring locks,
 55 With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,
 Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
 Much like his father, but his mother more,
 Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd:
 Who, ripe and frolic of his full grown age,
 ■ Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
 At last betakes him to this ominous wood,
 And in thick shelter of black shades imbowr'd
 Excels his mother at her mighty art,
 Offring to every weary travailer
 65 His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
 To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they taste
 (For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst)
 Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,
 Th' express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd
 70 Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear,
 Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
 All other parts remaining as they were;
 And they, so perfect is their misery,
 Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
 75 But boast themselves more comely then before,
 And all their friends and native home forget,
 To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
 Ther'fore, when any favour'd of high Jove
 Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
 80 Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
 I shoot from Heav'n, to give him safe convoy
 As now I do: but first I must put off

55. See *L' Allegro*, line 16.

64. The form *travailer* for *traveller* is common with Milton and indicates the derivation of the word, for the sense of toil and labor underlies it.

These my sky robes, spun out of Iris' woof,
 And take the weeds and likenes of a swain
 85 That to the service of this house belongs,
 Who, with his soft pipe and smooth-dittied song,
 Well knows to still the wilde winds when they roar,
 And hush the waving woods ; nor of lesse faith,
 And in this office of his mountain watch,
 90 Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
 Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
 Of hatefull steps; I must be viewles now.

COMUS enters with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other, with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild Beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistring ; they come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.

Comus. The Star that bids the Shepherd fold
 Now the top of Heav'n doth hold,
 195 And the gilded car of day
 His glowing axle doth allay
 In the steep Atlantic stream ;
 And the slope sun his upward beam
 Shoots against the dusky pole,
 100 Pacing toward the other gole
 Of his chamber in the east.
 Meanwhile welcome Joy, and Feast,

84. The part of the Attendant Spirit who assumes the dress and appearance of a servant of the house was taken by Henry Lawes, the musician, who furnished the music for the mask.

97. Milton makes use of the ancient notion which regarded the earth as flat, and encircled by a stream flowing from south to north along the western coast of Europe, thence east, and so from north to south on the east coast of Asia.

98. Slope, i. e. setting.

100. Gole = goal, and is nearer the derivative spelling, for the word is another form for *pole*, as marking the end of a race-

- Midnight Shout, and Revelry,
 Topsy Dance, and Jollity.
- 105 Braid your locks with rosy twine,
 Dropping odours, dropping wine.
 Rigor now is gone to bed,
 And Advice with scrupulous head,
 Strict Age, and soure Severity,
- 110 With their grave saws in slumber lie.
 We that are of purer fire
 Imitate the starry quire,
 Who in their nightly watchfull sphears
 Lead in swift round the months and years.
- The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
 Now to the moon in wavering morrice move,
 And on the tawny sands and shelves
 Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves;
 By dimpled brook, and fountain brim,
- 120 The wood-nymphs, deckt with daisies trim,
 Their merry wakes and pastimes keep;
 What hath night to do with sleep?
 Night hath better sweets to prove:
 Venus now wakes, and wak'ns Love.
- 125 Come, let us our rights begin,
 'Tis onely day-light that makes sin,
 Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
 Hail, Goddesses of Nocturnal sport,
 Dark-veil'd Cotytto, t' whom the secret flame

117. *Shelves*. We are wont to speak of a shelving beach.

125. *Rights*. So Milton; and it is possible that *rites* is not an exact equivalent.

128. *Goddesses*. Observe that in other places Milton has not used the final *se*.

129. *Cotytto*. A more familiar form was Cotys. She was a Thracian divinity, and the orgies in her honor were celebrated on hill tops.

- 180 Of mid-night torches burns ; mysterious dame,
 That ne'er art call'd but when the dragon womb
 Of Stygian darknes spets her thickest gloom,
 And makes one blot of all the air,
 Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
 135 Wher'in thou ridst with Hecat', and befriend
 Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end
 Of all thy dues be done, and none left out
 Ere the babbling eastern scout,
 The nice morn on th' Indian steep,
 140 From her cabin'd loop hole peep,
 And to the tell-tale sun descry
 Our conceal'd solemnity.
 Come, knit hands, and beat the ground,
 In a light fantastic round.

THE MEASURE.

- 145 Break off, break off, I feel the different pace
 Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
 Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees ;
 Our number may affright : Some Virgin sure
 (For so I can distinguish by mine art)
 150 Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
 And to my wily trains ; I shall ere long
 Be well stock't with as fair a herd as graz'd
 About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
 My dazzling spells into the spungy air,
 155 Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
 And give it false presentments, lest the place
 And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
 And put the damsel to suspicious flight ;

144. See *L' Allegro*, line 34.

147. *Shrouds*. See Ezekiel xxxi. 3, and a line in Lowell's *Biglow Papers*, Second Series, No. vi.

Which must not be, for that's against my course:
 160 I under fair pretence of friendly ends,
 And well-plac'd words of glozing courtesy
 Baited with reasons not unplaussible,
 Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
 And hug him into snares. When once her eye
 165 Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
 I shall appear some harmles villager,
 Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
 But here she comes; I fairly step aside
 And hearken, if I may her business here.

The LADY enters.

■ *Lady.* This way the noise was, if mine ear be
 true,
 My best guide now; me thought it was the sound
 Of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,
 Such as the jocond flute or gamesome pipe
 Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds,
 175 When for their teeming flocks and granges full
 In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
 And thank the gods amiss. I should be loath
 To meet the rudeness and swill'd insolence
 Of such late wassailers; yet O where else
 180 Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
 In the blind mazes of this tangl'd wood?

161. *Glozing.* Milton uses the word in *Paradise Lost*, ix. 549:

“So gloz'd the tempter, and his poem tun'd.”

Here he anticipates the serpentine notion of temptation.

167. *Keeps up.* It must be remembered that it is late in
 the night. *Gear* = business.

168. *Fairly* = softly.

180. In *Samson Agonistes*, line 335, Milton writes:—

“Hither hath inform'd
 Your younger feet.”

My Brothers, when they saw me wearied out
 With this long way, resolving here to lodge
 Under the spreading favour of these pines,
 185 Stept, as they said, to the next thicket side
 To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
 As the kind hospitable woods provide.
 They left me then, when (the gray-hooded Ev'n,
 Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
 190 Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain.)
 But where they are, and why they came not back,
 Is now the labour of my thoughts : 't is likeliest
 They had ingag'd their wandring steps too far ;
 And envious darknes, ere they could return,
 195 Had stole them from me ; else, O thievish Night,
 Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
 In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
 That nature hung in heav'n, and fill'd their lamps
 With everlasting oil, to give due light
 200 To the misled and lonely traveller ?
 This is the place, as well as I may guess,
 Whence ev'n now the tumult of loud mirth
 Was rife, and perfe't in my list'ning ear ;
 Yet nought but single darknes do I find.

193. Ingag'd. A somewhat obscure use of the word. But Milton in *Paradise Lost*, ix. 961-963, says, —

“ O glorious trial of exceeding love,
 Illustrious evidence, example high,
 Engaging me to emulate ; ”

and the notion, of urging or inviting, here expressed, seems most applicable to this line. By a not uncommon inversion, the lady says : “ Their wandering steps had been drawn on too far, and envious Darkness, thievish Night had stolen my brothers from me.”

203. In prose, the lady would have said that she heard this tumult perfectly.

204. Single darkness = darkness alone.

- 205 What might this be? A thousand fantasies
 Begin to throng into my memory
 Of calling shapes, and beck'ning shadows dire,
 And airy tongues, that syllable men's names
 On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
 210 These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
 The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
 By a strong-siding champion, Conscience. —
 O welcome, pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
 Thou hovering Angel, girt with golden wings,
 215 And thou, unblemish't form of Chastity!
 I see ye visibly, and now believe
 That he, the Supreme Good, t' whom all things ill
 Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
 Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
 220 To keep my life and honour unassail'd.
 Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
 I did not err, there does a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
 225 And casts a gleam over this tufted grove:
 I cannot hallow to my Brothers, but
 Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
 I'll venter, for my new enliv'nd spirits
 Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

214. The third form may easily be inferred from the two members of the triad in the previous line.

217. Again Milton's perfectly tuned ear must be followed in accenting **Supreme**.

228. **Venter**. This pronunciation of *venture* still lingers in New England.

SONG.

- *Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen*
Within thy airy shell
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-imbroider'd vale
Where the love-lorn nightingale
 235 *Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well :*
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are ?
O if thou have
Hid them in some flowry cave,
 240 *Tell me but where,*
Sweet Queen of Parly, Daughter of the Sphear!
So mayst thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heav'n's harmo-
nies.

Enter COMUS.

- Comus.* Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
 245 Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
 Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
 And with these raptures moves the vocal air
 To testify his hidd'n residence ;
 How sweetly did they float upon the wings
 250 Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
 At every fall smoothing the Raven downe
 Of darknes till it smil'd : I have oft heard
 My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
 Amidst the flowry-kirtl'd Naiades,

231. *Airy shell.* As the sea-nymphs were fancied housed in sea-shells, so might Echo be given an airy shell.

241. *Sphear* = atmosphere.

251. *Fall.*

"That strain again! It had a dying fall."

Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, Act I. sc. i.

255 Culling their potent hearbs, and balefull drugs,
 Who, ■ they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
 And lap it in Elysium; Scylla wept,
 And chid her barking waves into attention,
 And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
 260 Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
 And in sweet madnes rob'd it of it self;
 But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
 Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
 I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
 265 And she shall be my queen. — Hail, foreign won-
 der!

Whom certain these rough shades did never breed
 Unlesse the Goddes that in rural shrine
 Dwell'st here with Pan, or Silvan, by blest song
 Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
 270 To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

Lady. Nay gentle Shepherd, ill is lost that praise
 That is addrest to unattending ears;
 Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
 How to regain my sever'd company,
 275 Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo
 To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Comus. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft
 you thus?

Lady. Dim darknes, and this leavy labyrinth.

Comus. Could that divide you from near-usher-
 ing guides?

258. In the ancient fable, Scylla was represented as an enchanted maiden, turned into a monster, and surrounded by hissing serpents and barking dogs, a natural personification of waves dashing against rocks.

277. In this dialogue of single lines, Milton was following the Greek tragedians.

- 280 *Lady.* They left me weary on a grassy turf.
Comus. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?
Lady. To seek i' th' valley some cool friendly
 Spring.
Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded,
 Lady?
Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick
 return.
 285 *Comus.* Perhaps fore-stalling night prevented
 them.
Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
Comus. Imports their loss, beside the present
 need?
Lady. No less then if I should my brothers
 lose.
Comus. Were they of manly prime, or youthful
 bloom?
 290 *Lady.* As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.
Comus. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd
 Ox

In his loose traces from the furrow came,
 And the swink't hedger at his supper sate;
 I saw them under a green mantling vine
 295 That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
 Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots.
 Their port was more than human, as they stood;
 I took it for a faëry vision
 Of some gay creatures of the element,
 300 That in the colours of the rainbow live
 And play i' th' plighted clouds. I was awe-strook,
 And as I past, I worshipt; if those you seek,

281. *Comus* instinctively thinks evil.

301. *Plighted* = folded. In one of his prose writings Milton says: "She wore a plighted garment of divers colours."

It were a journey like the path to heav'n
To help you find them.

Lady.

Gentle Villager,

305 What readiest way would bring me to that place?

Comus. Due west it rises from this shrubby
point.

Lady. To find that out, good Shepherd, I suppose,

In such a scant allowance of star-light,

Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,

310 Without the sure guess of well-practiz'd feet.

Comus. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild Wood,

And every bosky bourn from side to side,

My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood,

315 And if your stray-attendants be yet lodg'd

Or shroud within these limits, I shall know

Ere morrow wake, or the low roosted lark

From her thach't pallet rouse; if otherwise

I can conduct you, Lady, to a low

320 But loyal cottage, where you may be safe

Till further quest.

Lady.

Shepherd, I take thy word,

And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,

Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds

With smoaky rafters, then in tapstry halls

325 And courts of princes, where it first was nam'd,

And yet is most pretended: in a place

Less warranted than this, or less secure,

I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.

313. Bourn. The Scottish form "burn" is still in common use, and in geographical names it is preserved, though its original meaning of brook is lost, e. g. Bannockburn. A brook was often a boundary, so this secondary meaning remains.

Eye me, blest Providence, and square my triall
 330 To my proportion'd strength. Shepherd, lead
 on. —

Enter THE TWO BROTHERS.

Elder Brother. Unmuffle, ye faint stars, and
 thou fair moon,

That wontst to love the travailer's benizon,
 Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
 And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here

335 In double night of darknes and of shades ;
 Or if your influence be quite damm'd up
 With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
 Though a rush candle, from the wicker hole
 Of some clay habitation, visit us
 340 With thy long levell'd rule of streaming light ;
 And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
 Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Second Brother. Or, if our eyes
 Be barr'd that happines, might we but hear
 The folded flocks pen'd in their watled cotes,
 345 Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
 Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
 Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
 'T would be some solace yet, some little cheering,
 In this close dungeon of innumerable boughs.
 350 But O that haples virgin, our lost Sister !
 Where may she wander now, whither betake her
 From the chill dew, amongst rude burrs and this-
 tles ?

Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
 Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm

342. The Cynosure is the constellation containing the polar
 star. See *L'Allegro*, line 80.

355 Leans her unpillow'd head fraught with sad fears.
 What if in wild amazement, and affright,
 Or, while we speak, within the direfull grasp
 Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

Elder Brother. Peace, brother, be not over-
 exquisite

360 To cast the fashion of uncertain evils;
 For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
 What need a man forestall his date of grief,
 And run to meet what he would most avoid?
 Or, if they be but false alarms of fear,

365 How bitter is such self-delusion!

I do not think my sister so to seek,
 Or so unprincipl'd in virtue's book,
 And the sweet peace that goodnes bosoms ever,
 As that the single want of light and noise

370 (Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
 Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
 And put them into mis-becoming plight.

Virtue could see to do what virtue would
 By her own radiant light, though Sun and Moon

375 Were in the flat sea sunk. (And Wisdom's self
 Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
 Where with her best nurse Contemplation,
 She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
 That in the various bustle of resort

380 Were all to-ruff'd, and sometimes impair'd.

360. A fortune teller would cast a figure to determine future events. We still say fore-cast, which is the significance here.

367. **Unprincipled**; that is, so untaught in the elementary studies.

376. **Seeks to.** See Deuteronomy xii. 5; 1 Kings xi. 24.

380. **To-ruff'd.** The prefix "to" is an old intensive form. The prefix "be" in the modern word "beruffled" has evidently the same force.

He that has light within his own clear breast,
 May sit i' th' center, and enjoy bright day:
 But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts,
 Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
 Himself is his own dungeon.)

- *Second Brother.* 'Tis most true
 That musing meditation most affects
 The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
 Far from the cheerfull haunt of men, and herds,
 And sits as safe as in a senat house;
 390 For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
 His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
 Or do his gray hairs any violence?
 But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
 Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
 395 Of dragon watch with unenchanted eye,
 To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit
 From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
 You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
 Of miser's treasure by an out-law's den,
 400 And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
 Danger will wink on opportunity,
 And let a single helpless maiden pass
 Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste.
 Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
 405 I fear the dread events that dog them both,
 Lest some ill greeting touch attempt the person
 Of our unowned sister.

- Elder Brother.* I do not, brother,
 Inferr as if I thought my sister's state
 Secure without all doubt, or controversy;
 410 Yet where an equall poise of hope and fear

382. Th' center. The centre of the earth, which was, according to the Ptolemaic system of astronomy, the centre of the universe, and the abode of darkness.

Does arbitrate th' event, my nature is
That I encline to hope, rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.

My sister is not so defenceless left

415 As you imagine ; she has a hidden strength
Which you remember not.

Second Brother. What hidden strength,

Unless the strength of Heav'n, if you mean that?

Elder Brother. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength

Which, if Heav'n gave it, may be term'd her own ;

420 'Tis chastity, my brother, chastity :

She that has that is clad in complete steel,
And like a quiver'd Nymph with arrows keen
May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds,

425 Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer
Will dare to soil her virgin purity :

Yea, there where very desolation dwells,
By grots, and caverns shag'd with horrid shades,

430 She may pass on with unblench't majesty,
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
In fog, or fire, by lake, or moorish fen,

412. **Encline.** The varying use of *e* and *i* in words of this compound appears to be a matter of euphony.

413. **Squint** = squint-eyed.

422. **Diana**, the chaste goddess, was represented also as a huntress.

423. **Trace.** We refer to this use when we speak of retracing our way.

430. **Unblench't** = undaunted. One is blenched or blanched (whitened) with fear.

432. See for this line *Hamlet*, Act I. sc. i. line 161.

Blue meager hag, or stubborn unlaïd ghost,
 435 That breaks his magic chains at curfeu time,
 No goblin, or swart faëry of the mine,
 Hath hurtfull power o'er true virginity.
 Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
 Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
 440 To testify the arms of chastity?
 Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
 Fair silver-shafted queen for ever chaste,
 Wherewith she tam'd the brinded lioness
 And spotted mountain pard, but set at nought
 445 The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
 Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' th'
 woods.

What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
 That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
 Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
 450 But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
 And noble grace that dash't brute violence
 With sudden adoration and blank awe?
 (So dear to heav'n is saintly chastity,
 That when a soul is found sincerely so,
 455 A thousand liveried angels lacky her,
 Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
 And in clear dream, and solemn vision,
 Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;))
 Till oft converse with heav'nly habitants
 460 Begin to cast a beam on th' outward shape,
 The unpolluted temple of the mind,

457. **Vision.** A word of three syllables.

460. Mr. Sprague calls attention to another poetic expression of Milton's philosophy, explanatory of this, in *Paradise Lost*, v. 468-505. **Begin** here is the subjunctive form. **Beam** is a beam of light, as used now in the word **sunbeam**.

And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
 Till all be made immortal: but when lust
 By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
 465 But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
 Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
 The soul grows clotted by contagion,
 Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
 The divine property of her first being.
 470 Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp
 Oft seen in charnell vaults and sepulchers,
 Lingerin' and sitting by a new made grave,
 As loath to leave the body that it lov'd,
 And link't it self by carnal sensuality
 475 To a degenerate and degraded state.

Second Brother. How charming is divine philosophy!

Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
 But musical as is Apollo's lute,
 And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
 Where no crude surfeit reigns.

480 *Elder Brother.* List, list! I hear
 Some far off hallow break the silent air.

Second Brother. Me thought so too; what
 should it be?

Elder Brother. For certain
 Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
 Or else some neighbour wood-man, or, at worst,
 485 Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

Second Brother. Heav'n keep my Sister. Agen,
 agen, and near!

Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

Elder Brother. I'll hallow.
 If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
 Defence is a good cause, and Heav'n be for us.

Enter the attendant SPIRIT, habited like a Shepherd.

490 That hallow I should know, what are you? Speak;
Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.

Spirit. What voice is that? my young Lord?
speak agen.

Second Brother. O brother, 't is my father's
Shepherd, sure.

Elder Brother. Thyrsis? Whose artful strains
have oft delay'd

495 The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale.
How cam'st thou here, good swain? hath any ram
Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggl'g wether the pen't flock forsook?

■ How could'st thou find this dark sequester'd nook?

Spirit. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next
joy,

I came not here on such a trivial toy
As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth

505 That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought

'To this my errand, and the care it brought.

But, O my virgin Lady, where is she?

How chance she is not in your company?

Elder Brother. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd,
without blame,

510 Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

Spirit. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

Elder Brother. What fears, good Thyrsis?
Prithee briefly shew.

Spirit. I'll tell ye; 't is not vain, or fabulous,
(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance,)

509. **Sadly** = soberly, seriously, not necessarily sorrowfully.
See *Paradise Lost*, vi. 541.

- 515 What the sage poets, taught by th' heavenly Muse,
 Storied of old in high immortal verse,
 Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles,
 And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to hell;
 For such there be, but unbelief is blind.
- 520 Within the navel of this hideous wood,
 Immur'd in cypress shades a sorcerer dwells,
 Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
 Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries;
 And here to every thirsty wanderer
- 525 By sly enticement gives his banefull cup,
 With many murmurs mixt, whose pleasing poison
 The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
 And the inglorious likenes of a beast
 Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
- 530 Character'd in the face: this I have learnt
 Tending my flocks hard by i' th' hilly crofts
 That brow this bottom glade, whence night by night
 He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,
 Like stabl'd wolves, or tigers at their prey,
- 535 Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
 In their obscur'd haunts of inmost bowres.
 Yet have they many baits, and guilefull spells,
 To inveigle and invite th' unwary sense
 Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
- 540 This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
 Had ta'n their supper on the savoury herb
 Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
 I sate me down to watch upon a bank
 With ivy canopied, and interwove

526. **Murmurs** = incantations. See line 817.

532. **Brow** = overlook, as from the brow of a hill.

540. **By then** = by the time when. We use the phrase in its demonstrative form, as when we say "I shall do it by then."

- 545 With flaunting honey-suckle, and began,
 Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
 To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
 Till fancy had her fill: but ere a close,
 The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
 550 And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance;
 At which I ceas't, and listen'd them a while,
 Till an unusuall stop of sudden silence
 Gave respite to the drowsy frightened steeds,
 That draw the litter of close-curtain'd sleep.
 555 At last ■ soft and solemn-breathing sound
 Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
 And stole upon the air, that even Silence
 Was took e're she was ware, and wish't she might
 Deny her nature, and be never more,
 560 Still to be so displac't. I was all ear,
 And took in strains that might create a soul
 Under the ribs of death: but O ere long
 Too well did I perceive it was the voice
 Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear sister.
 565 Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,
 And O poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
 How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
 Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
 Through paths and turnings oft'n trod by day,
 570 Till guided by mine ear I found the place
 Where that damn'd wizard, hid in sly disguise,
 (For so by certain signs I knew) had met
 Already, ere my best speed could prævent,

547. **Meditate** == practise.

556. **Steam.** The edition of 1673 reads *stream*.

558. **Was took.** We are wont to say "I was greatly taken" with this or that.

573. **Prævent.** This form suggests the derivation of the

The aidless innocent Lady, his wish't prey ;
 575 Who gently ask't if he had seen such two,
 Supposing him some neighbour villager.
 Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess't
 Ye were the two she mean't ; with that I sprung
 Into swift flight, till I had found you here,
 580 But further know I not.

Second Brother. O night and shades,
 How are ye join'd with Hell in triple knot,
 Against th' unarmed weaknes of one virgin,
 Alone, and helpless ! Is this the confidence
 You gave me, Brother ?

Elder Brother. Yes, and keep it still ;
 585 Lean on it safely ; not a period
 Shall be unsaid for me : against the threats
 Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
 Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm,
 (Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt,
 590 Surpriz'd by unjust force, but not enthrall'd ;
 Yea, even that which mischief meant most harm
 Shall in the happy trial prove most glory.)
 But evil on it self shall back recoil,
 And mix no more with goodness, when at last
 595 Gather'd like scum, and set'l'd to it self,
 It shall be in eternal restless change
 Self-fed, and self-consum'd : if this fail,
 The pillar'd firmament is rott'nness,
 And earth's base built on stubble. But come,
 let's on !

word from the Latin *prævenire*. For the old meaning of *prevent*, notice the collect for 17th Sunday after Trinity.

580. It is curious that we now say *further* not *further* ; but *murder*, not *murther*.

585. *Period*. That is, not ■ sentence of my philosophic speech shall be unsaid, so far as I am concerned.

■ Against th' opposing will and arm of heav'n
 May never this just sword be lifted up;
 But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
 With all the grisly legions that troop
 Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
 605 Harpyies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
 'Twixt Africa and Inde, I'll find him out,
 And force him to return his purchase back,
 Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
 Curs'd as his life.

Spirit. Alas! good vent'rous Youth,
 610 I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
 But here thy sword can do thee little stead;
 Farr other arms and other weapons must
 Be those that quell the might of hellish charms;
 He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
 615 And crumble all thy sinews.

Elder Brother. Why, prithee, Shepherd,
 How durst thou then thyself approach so near
 As to make this relation?

Spirit. Care and utmost shifts
 How to secure the Lady from surprisal
 Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
 620 Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
 In every virtuous plant and healing herb,
 That spreads her verdant leaf to th' morning ray;
 He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing,
 Which when I did, he on the tender grass
 625 Would sit, and hearken e'en to ecstasy,
 And in requitall ope his leathern scrip,
 And shew me simples of a thousand names,
 Telling their strange and vigorous faculties.

620. Of small regard to see to = insignificant to look at.

Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
 630 But of divine effect, he cull'd me out ;
 The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
 But in another country, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flowre, but not in this
 soil :

Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain
 635 Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon :
 And yet more med'cinal is it then that moly
 That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave ;
 He call'd it hæmony, and gave it me,
 And bad me keep it as of sovran use
 640 'Gainst all inchantments, mildew blast, or damp,
 Or ghastly furies' apparition.
 I purs't it up, but little reck'ning made,
 Till now that this extremity compell'd,
 But now I find it true ; for by this means
 645 I knew the foul inchanter though disguis'd,
 Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells,
 And yet came off : if you have this about you,
 (As I will give you when we go) you may
 Boldly assault the necromancer's hall ;
 650 Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood -
 And brandish't blade rush on him, break his glass,
 And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
 But seize his wand : though he and his curst crew
 Fierce sign of battail make, and menace high,
 655 Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke,
 Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

634. *Like* — i. e. as little valued as known.

637. When it is remembered that Comus possesses ■ like power with Circe, the comparison here is suggestive, for moly was the herb that Hermes gave Odysseus for protection against Circe's charm.

Elder Brother. Thyrsis, lead on apace, I'll follow thee,
And some good angel bear a shield before us.

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness; soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS appears with his rabble, and the LADY set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

Comus. Nay, Lady, sit; if I but wave this wand

■ Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster,
And you a statue; or as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

Lady. Fool, do not boast:

Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
665 Thou hast immanacled while Heav'n sees good.

Comus. Why are you vext, Lady? why do you frown?

Here dwel no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies farr: See, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthfull thoughts,
670 When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mixt.
675 Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.

667. From these gates. The notion of a walled town with gates guarded has remained in literature as a symbol of social life, though it is but historical in Christendom.

Why should you be so cruel to your self,
 ■ And to those dainty limbs which nature lent
 For gentle usage, and soft delicacy?
 But you invert the cov'nants of her trust,
 And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
 With that which you receiv'd on other terms;
 ■ Scorning the unexempt condition
 By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
 Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
 That have been tir'd all day without repast,
 And timely rest have wanted; but, fair Virgin,
 690 This will restore all soon.

Lady. 'T will not, false traitor,
 'T will not restore the truth and honesty
 That thou hast banish't from thy tongue with lies.
 Was this the cottage, and the safe abode
 Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these.
 695 These ugly-headed Monsters? Mercy guard me!
 Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver!
 Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
 With visor'd falshood and base forgery?
 And would'st thou seek again to trap me here
 700 With lickerish baits fit to ensnare a brute?
 Were it a draft for Juno when she banquets,
 I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none
 But such as are good men can give good things,
 And that which is not good, is not delicious
 705 To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.

Comus. O foolishnes of men! that lend their
 ears

To those budge doctors of the Stoic Furr,

679. "Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self so cruel."

Shakespeare, Sonnet I.

695. Ugly. Milton spells this word *ougly*.

And fetch their precepts from the Cynic Tub,
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.
710 Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth,
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste?
715 And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd
silk
To deck her sons ; and that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutch't th' all-worshipt ore, and precious gems,
720 To store her children with : if all the world
Should in a pet of temp'rance feed on Pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but
frieze,
Th' all-giver would be unthank't, would be un-
prais'd,
Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd ;
■ And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own
weight,
And strangl'd with her waste fertility ;
730 Th' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark't with
plumes,
The herds would over-multitude their Lords,
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and th' unsought
diamonds
Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,

And so bestudd with stars, that they below
 735 Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
 To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
 List, Lady, be not coy, and be not cosen'd
 With that same vaunted name Virginity.
 Beauty is nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
 740 But must be current, and the good thereof
 Consists in mutual and partak'n bliss,
 Unsavoury in th' injoyment of it self;
 If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
 It withers on the stalk with languish't head.
 745 Beauty is nature's brag, and must be shown
 In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
 Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
 It is for homely features to keep home,
 They had their name thence; coarse complexions,
 750 And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply
 The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
 What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that,
 Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
 There was another meaning in these gifts:
 755 Think what, and be adviz'd; you are but young yet.

Lady. I had not thought to have unlockt my
 lips

In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
 Would think to charm my judgement, as mine eyes,

748. See Shakespeare, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act I., sc. i.
 line 2.

751. From house wife to huswife, from huswife to hussy are
 successive steps in word degeneration. On the eastern shore of
 Maryland where old English terms linger, one may hear of the
 hen-hussy, meaning the girl who takes care of the chickens, and
 an old New England term for a capacious bag holding all man-
 ner of mending and sewing materials is a huswife, pronounced
 huzzif.

Obtruding false rules pranckt in reason's garb.
 760 I hate when vice can bolt her arguments,
 And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
 Impostor, do not charge most innocent Nature,
 As if she would her children should be riotous
 With her abundance ; she, good cateress,
 765 Means her provision only to the good,
 That live according to her sober laws,
 And holy dictate of spare temperance :
 If every just man that now pines with want
 Had but a moderate and beseeming share
 770 Of that which lewdly-pamper'd luxury
 Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
 Nature's full blessings would be well dispenc't
 In unsuperfluous even proportion,
 And she no whit encumber'd with her store ;
 775 And then the giver would be better thank't,
 His praise due paid, for swinish gluttony
 Ne'er looks to heav'n amidst his gorgeous feast,
 But with besotted base ingratitude
 Crams, and blasphemes his feeder. Shall I go
 on ?
 780 Or have I said enough ? To him that dares
 Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
 Against the sun-clad power of Chastity,
 Fain would I something say, yet to what end ?
 Thou hast not ear, nor soul, to apprehend
 785 The sublime notion, and high mystery,
 That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
 And serious doctrine of Virginity.

760. **Bolt.** Used in the miller's sense : to sift, to separate meal from bran.

762. The lady's virtue finds tongue in the lines that follow, to answer the specious argument of Comus.

And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happines then this thy present lot.

790 Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
Thou art not fit to hear thy self convinc't;
Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rap't spirits
795 To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
And the brute earth would lend her nerves, and
shake,

Till all thy magic structures, rear'd so high,
Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.

800 *Comus.* She fables not: I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power;
And though not mortal, yet a cold shuddring dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
805 To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly.— Come, no more!
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation;
I must not suffer this, yet 't is but the lees
810 And settlings of a melancholy blood;
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

788. **Worthy.** In Milton's time this word was used either of ill or of good desert, and in the Bible we read of one worthy of few stripes, and one worthy of many stripes. Now we rarely use it of ill desert except in the phrase "worthy of punishment."

791. **Dazzling fence.** Comus employs rhetoric as skilfully as the fencer employs his rapier.

808. **Canon laws of our foundation.** By an audacious figure, Comus likens his society of brutes to the church.

The BROTHERS rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The attendant SPIRIT comes in.

Spirit. What, have you let the false enchanter
'scape?

815 O ye mistook, ye should have snatcht his wand,
And bound him fast: without his rod revers't,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixt, and motionless;

820 Yet stay, be not disturb'd: now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be us'd,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains.

There is a gentle nymph not farr from hence,
825 That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn
stream:

Sabrina is her name, ■ Virgin pure;
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the scepter from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsell, flying the mad pursuit
830 Of her enraged stepdam Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That stay'd her flight with his cross-flowing course.
The water nymphs, that in the bottom play'd,
Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,
835 Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;
Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectar'd lavers strew'd with asphodel,

816. As the wand must be reversed to undo its enchanting power, so the words of the incantation must also be said backward.

And through the porch and inlet of each sense
 840 Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she reviv'd,
 And underwent a quick immortal change,
 Made Goddess of the River: still she retains
 Her maid'n gentlenes, and oft at eve
 Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
 845 Helping all urchin blasts, and ill luck signs
 That the shrewd medling Elf delights to make,
 Which she with precious vial'd liquors heals;
 For which the shepherds at their festivals
 Carol her goodnes loud in rustic lays,
 850 And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
 Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
 And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
 The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
 If she be right invok't in warbled song;
 855 For maid'nhood she loves, and will be swift
 To aid a virgin, such as was her self,
 In hard besetting need; this will I try,
 And add the pow'r of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
 860 *Listen where thou art sitting*
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
 865 *Goddess of the silver lake,*
Listen and save!

845. **Urchin blasts.** Elfin, mischievous sudden blight, supposed to come from pestilential winds.

846. **Shrewd.** The notion of quick-witted is less intended than that of brawling or cursing which resides in the word shrew.

Listen and appear to us
 In name of great Oceanus :
 By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
 870 And Tethys' grave majestic pace ;
 By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
 And the Carpathian wizard's hook ;
 By scaly Triton's winding shell,
 And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell ;
 875 By Leucothea's lovely hands,
 And her son that rules the strands ;
 By Thetis' tinsel slipper'd feet,
 And the songs of Sirens sweet ;
 By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
 880 And fair Ligea's golden comb,
 Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
 Sleeking her soft alluring locks ;
 By all the nymphs that nightly dance
 Upon thy streams with wily glance :
 885 Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
 From thy coral-pav'n bed,
 And bridle in thy headlong wave,
 Till thou our summons answer'd have.
Listen and save !

SABRINA rises, attended by water-nymphs, and sings.

890 *By the rushy-fringed bank,
 Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
 My sliding Chariot stays,
 Thick set with Agate, and the azurn sheen
 Of Turkis blew, and emerald green,
 ■ That in the channell strays ;*

872. Carpathian wizard. Proteus.

887. " There is ■ gentle nymph, not far from hence,
 That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream."

*Whilst from off the waters fleet,
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread ;*
■ *Gentle swain, at thy request
I am here !*

Spirit. Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmed band
905 Of true virgin here distressed
Through the force and through the wile
Of unblest inchanter vile.

Sabrina. Shepherd, 't is my office best
To help insnared chastity :
910 Brightest Lady, look on me ;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops that from my fountain pure
I have kept of precious cure,
Thrice upon thy fingers tip,
■ Thrice upon thy rubied lip ;
Next this marble venom'd seat,
Smear'd with gumms of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold :
Now the spell hath lost his hold ;
■ And I must haste ere morning hour
To wait in Amphitrite's bowr.

SABRINA descends, and the LADY rises out of her seat.

Spirit. Virgin, daughter of Locrine, •
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmed waves for this
925 Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand petty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills :

- Summer drouth or singed air
 Never scorch thy tresses fair,
 ■ Nor wet October's torrent flood
 Thy molten crystal fill with mudd;
 May thy billows roll ashore
 The beryl, and the golden ore;
 May thy lofty head be crown'd
 ■ With many a tower and terrace round,
 And here and there thy banks upon
 With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.
 Come, Lady, while Heaven lends us grace,
 Let us fly this cursed place,
 940 Lest the Sorcerer us intice
 With some other new device.
 Not a waste or needless sound,
 Till we come to holier ground.
 I shall be your faithful guide
 ■ Through this gloomy covert wide;
 And not many furlongs thence
 Is your Father's residence,
 Where this night are met in state
 Many a friend to gratulate
 ■ His wish't presence, and beside
 All the swains that there abide,
 With jiggs, and rural dance resort:
 We shall catch them at their sport,
 And our sudden coming there
 955 Will double all their mirth and chere:
 Come, let us haste; the Stars grow high,
 But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

955. *Chere* = cheer. For sake of rhyme to the eye apparently, since Milton's customary form is *cheer*. See *L'Allegro*, line 98.

The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the President's castle; then come in country dancers, after them the attendant SPIRIT with the two BROTHERS and the LADY.

SONG.

Spirit. Back, Shepherds, back, enough you play,

Till next sun-shine holiday;

■ *Here be without duck or nod*

Other trippings to be trod

Of lighter toes, and such court guise

As Mercury did first devise,

With the mincing Dryades,

■ *On the lawns, and on the leas.*

This second Song presents them to their FATHER and MOTHER.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,

I have brought ye new delight,

Here behold so goodly grown

Three fair branches of your own;

770 *Heav'n hath timely tri'd their youth,*

Their faith, their patience, and their truth,

And sent them here through hard assays

With a crown of deathless praise,

To triumph in victorious dance

775 *O'er sensual folly, and intemperance.*

The dances ended, the SPIRIT epiloguises.

Spirit. To the ocean now I fly,

And those happy climes that lie

Where day never shuts his eye,

Up in the broad fields of the sky:

780 *There I suck the liquid air*

All amidst the gardens fair

Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
 That sing about the golden tree :
 Along the crisped shades and bowres
 985 Revels the spruce and jocond Spring,
 The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Howres,
 Thither all their bounties bring ;
 There eternal Summer dwells,
 And West-winds, with musky wing,
 990 About the cedarn alleys fling
 Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
 Iris there with humid bow
 Waters the odorous banks that blow
 Flowers of more mingled hew
 ■ Then her purfl'd scarf can shew,
 And drenches with Elysian dew
 (List, mortals, if your ears be true)
 Beds of hyacinth and roses,
 Where young Adonis oft reposes,
 1000 Waxing well of his deep wound
 In slumber soft, and on the ground
 Sadly sits th' Assyrian queen ;
 But farr above in spangled sheen
 Celestial Cupid, her fam'd son, advanc't,
 1005 Holds his dear Psyche sweet intranc't,
 After her wandring labours long,
 Till free consent the gods among
 Make her his eternal bride,
 And from her fair unspotted side
 1010 Two blissful twins are to be born,
 Youth and Joy ; so Jove hath sworn.
 But now my task is smoothly done :
 I can fly, or I can run

Quickly to the green earth's end,
1015 Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the Moon.

(Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue, she alone is free ;
1020 She can teach ye how to clime
Higher than the spheary chime :
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heav'n it self would stoop to her.)

1020. *Clime*, an older form of *climb*.

AMEN !

LYCIDAS.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

LYCIDAS was first published as the last of a group of poems in memory of Edward King, a fellow-collegian of Milton's, who had written some poems himself, but was looking to a place as a priest in the Church of England; he was shipwrecked when on his way across the Irish channel, sailing from England to Ireland. In the volume which was published in the winter of 1637-38, Milton gave no title to the poem, and signed the poem simply with his initials, J. M.; but when he placed it in his first collection of poems in 1645, he gave it the title it bears. He took the name Lycidas from that of a shepherd in one of Virgil's Eclogues. The reader of the Eclogues will note not merely names like Lycidas, Amaryllis, Damætas, Neæra, which Milton has borrowed from Virgil, but many felicitous phrases which are deft translations from the Eclogues.

The entire conceit of shepherds and their songs which runs through Lycidas was familiar not only in Roman but in English verse; but Milton, using it first as a slight veil to cast over personal associations, lifts the conception into dignity and a grave value above personal lament, by his bitter reproach of the shepherds of the sheepfold of the church. When he republished *Lycidas* in his own collection, he wrote: "In this Monody the author bewails a learned friend,

unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas, 1637; and by occasion foretells the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height." The words in italic show how his mind was stirring, and how deeply he was reflecting on the great religious contentions of his country. England was on the eve of civil war, and the firm hand of the ecclesiastical authorities was lying heavily on many men's consciences. It is not strange, therefore, that the lighter strains which sounded in *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and *Comus* here pass into those organ notes which were to be heard after a score of years fully and in sustained measure in *Paradise Lost*.

I The Poet as a Shepherd

A. Prologue

1-14 Occasion of poem

15-22 Invocation to Muses

23-36 Milton's Relations with

B. Body of poem - Sorrow and indignation at loss of his companion. His fate prophesied.

37-49 Milton's own sense of loss

50-63 Neither Nymphs nor Muses could prevent his

(64-84 digression, The true poet & his reward)

85-107 Neptune was not to be

Camus bewails his loss

108-112 St. Peter (the church) Muses

true son (113-181 digression)

132-151 All Nature may

Lycidas is not really dead,
I The Poet in the Epilogue
(186-197) reviews the
shepherd's theme.

LYCIDAS.

- YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sear,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forc'd fingers rude
■ Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.
10 Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his wat'ry bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
15 Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,

1. Yet once more. Milton was now in the full tide of his first period of verse, and as he attacks this new subject it is with a fresh consciousness of his high poetic errand; and as the opening lines show, in a figure which disregards strict literalness of parallel, with a keen sense of the untimely fate which calls out his poetic speech.

2. The form sear was more common in Milton's time than now when *sere* prevails, but Scott used *sear*.

6. Dear = costly.

10. Readers of Virgil will note the likeness to *neget quis carmina Gallo* in the tenth Eclogue.

13. Welter = rise and fall with the waves.

15. Milton, who looks for his models to classic rather than earlier English verse, follows the almost uniform mode of elegiac verse in this summons to the muses who dwell by Helicon.

fake sons of the church & their

That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring.
 Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
 Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse ;
 So may some gentle Muse

20 With lucky words favour my destin'd urn,
 And, as he passes, turn,
 And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

For we were nurst upon the self-same hill,
 Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill ;
 ■ Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
 Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
 We drove a-field, and both together heard
 What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
 Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
 ■ Oft till the Star that rose, at ev'ning, bright
 Toward Heav'n's descent had slop'd his westering
 wheel.

Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute ;
 Temper'd to th' oaten flute,
 Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with clov'n heel
 35 From the glad sound would not be absent long ;
 And old Damœtas lov'd to hear our song.

16. Milton drew this from the Greek poet Hesiod.

19. *Muse* = poet.

20. The accent in reading should be on *my*, since the poet is wishing for a future reward of verse for himself, like that he is about to bestow.

23. It should be remembered that the singer of this monody feigns himself and Lycidas, after the manner of ancient verse, to be shepherds. The actual fact was that they had a common college.

28. *Gray-fly*, otherwise the trumpet-fly.

33. The fiction of shepherd life is continued. In fancy the rude pipe made of straw is played on, the rural ditties being tempered or set to it.

36. *Damœtas*. Theocritus and Virgil used this name for the

But O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
 Now thou art gone, and never must return!
 Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
 40 With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
 And all their echoes, mourn.
 The willows, and the hazel copses green,
 Shall now no more be seen
 Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
 45 As killing as the canker to the rose,
 Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
 Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
 When first the white-thorn blows;
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.
 50 Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless
 deep
 Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?
 For neither were ye playing on the steep,
 Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
 55 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:
 Ay me! I fondly dream
 Had ye been there — for what could that have done?
 What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,

herdsman in their pastorals. It is suggested that Milton was making playful reference to the tutor of King and himself, W. Chappell, of Christ's College.

38. **Must.** If Milton had said *wilt*, he would have implied that Lycidas could but would not; *must* declares that he is under constraint.

41. The **echoes** are thus made individual voices of nature.

53. The fact that King was shipwrecked when making passage from England to Ireland explains why Milton thus chooses Welsh headlands and the river Dee (**Deva**) with their early poetic associations.

56. **Fondly.** See *Il Penseroso*, line 6.

- The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
 ■ Whom universal nature did lament,
 When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
 His gory visage down the stream was sent,
 Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
 (Alas! what boots it with uncessant care
 65 To tend the homely slighted shepherd's trade,
 And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
 Were it not better done as others use,
 To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
 70 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
 (That last infirmity of noble mind)
 To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
 But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,

63. Milton derives from Virgil chiefly the story of Orpheus. He was ■ famous mythical poet, son of the muse Calliope. So enchanting was his song that he could move trees and rocks and wild beasts. He descended into the lower world after his wife Eurydice, who had died, and so prevailed upon Persephone with his song that she let Eurydice return with him; but he forfeited her before they reached the upper air through his disobedience in looking back upon the passage they had threaded. He was torn in pieces by the Thracian Mænads because of the hatred he inspired by his loss of Eurydice. They cast his head and lyre into the Hebrus, which bore these remains to Lesbos, where they were buried.

66. Milton's own high devotion to his art is here intimated. There is ■ Virgilian phrase in the line. Virgil in Eclogue I. line 2, wrote, —

"Sylvestrem tenui Musam meditaris avena,"

which Sydney Smith jocosely translated, "We cultivate literature on a little oatmeal."

67. Use = are wont. We use the past form only in this significance.

69. Amaryllis, Neæra. These are fanciful names. The former is a Virgilian remembrance.

- And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
 ■ Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears,
 And slits the thin-spun life. But not the praise,
 Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears ;
 Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
 Nor in the glistening foil
 80 Set off to th' world, nor in broad rumour lies ;
 But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
 And perfe't witness of all-judging Jove ;
 As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
 Of so much fame in Heav'n expect thy meed,
 85 O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds,
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood ;
 But now my oat proceeds,
 And listens to the Herald of the Sea
 90 That came in Neptune's plea ;
 He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
 What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain ?
 And question'd every gust of rugged wings

74. Blaze.

"For what is glory but the blaze of fame?"

Paradise Regained, iii. 47.

75. **Fury.** In ancient mythology, as Milton knew well, it was the office of one of the three fates to snip the thread of life. The use of fury may have been accidental, or, wanting a dys-syllable, the poet may have used his authority in handling classic traditions — more than once he invents his classic myths — to put the shears into the hands of a blind fury as a more dramatic personage for his purpose.

79. **Foil.** Fame, the poet says, is of immortal growth ; nor does it lie either in some shining contrast or in broad rumor.

81. **By** = under the light of.

82. **Perfet** = perfect, from the French form.

86. **Mincius.** A remembrance of Virgil, *Georgics* iii. 13-15. The poet there offers to build a votive offering by the Mincio.

That blows from off each beaked promontory :

95 They knew not of his story,

And sage Hippotades their answer brings,

That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd ;

The air was calm, and on the level brine

Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.

100 It was that fatall and perfidious bark,

Built in th' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,

That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,

His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,

105 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge

Like to that sanguine flow'r inscrib'd with woe.

Ah ! Who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge ?

Last came, and last did go,

The Pilot of the Galilean lake ;

110 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain

(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).

He shook his mitred locks, and stern bespake :

96. **Hippotades** = Æolus, son of Hippotas.

97. **Was stray'd.** This form still lingers with us, but it sounds to most a little stiff. It holds, however, in academic use, as when we say a man was graduated from college.

103. **Camus.** It will be remembered that King was from the college on the Cam.

Went = wended his way.

104. **Bonnet.** The Scotch still use this word for male as well as female head covering.

106. **Like**, i. e. ■ figure like. **Sanguine flower** = the hyacinth.

111. To know the uses of the keys one needs but to recall the charge to St. Peter.

112. **Mitred locks.** Milton was writing in a time when Episcopacy was a question of the hour. He himself was opposed to Episcopacy as he saw it, but the true overseeing of souls was another matter, and thus he makes St. Peter a bishop.

“How well could I have spar’d for thee, young
swain,

Enow of such as for their bellies’ sake

115 Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!

Of other care they little reck’ning make,

Then how to scramble at the shearers’ feast,

And shove away the worthy bidden guest:

Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how
to hold

120 A sheep-hook, or have learn’d ought else the least

That to the faithful herdman’s art belongs!

What recks it them? What need they? They are
sped;

And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs

Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;

125 The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,

But swoln with wind, and the rank mist they draw,

Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;

114–131. In this terrible indictment by St. Peter of the priestly shepherds of the flock of English souls, Milton pours out with impassioned words his own stern judgment. For the satisfaction of carnal desires such shepherds enter the fold by various doors other than the one door; for Milton could not forget the parable of shepherd and fold from the lips of the Great Shepherd. They creep, that is, they enter by intrigue and cunning; they intrude, thrust themselves in with insolence; they climb, seek ambitiously for their own ends to mount step by step to high dignities. As the bishop is one who by his name oversees, so these are blind; as the pastor is one who feeds another, so the most unnatural attributes would be blindness and eating, and *blind mouths* becomes a bold condemnation of iniquitous practice in false shepherds. For a striking study of the whole passage from which these points are taken, see Ruskin, *Sesame and Lilies*, 20–22.

123. **When they list** = when it is their pleasure. See John
iii. 8.

Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said :

130 But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more."

Return, Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams ; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
135 Their bells, and flourets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use,
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
140 That on the green turf suck the honied showres,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowres.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,

128. **The grim wolf with privy paw.** The reference here is to the accessions which the Romish church was quickly making to itself, through the influence of the court. It is barely possible that Milton was girding at the Privy Council, which with the king was practically the government of the realm, in opposition to the parliament.

130. **Two-handed engine.** *Engine* was used of implements both large and small ; it took two hands to swing the executioner's axe. The reference here may be to the English Parliament.

132. The poet, remembering how far he has been led away from the theme he entered on, makes this sudden transition. The river Alpheus was fabled to have passed under the sea and reissued in Sicily.

135. **Bells**, i. e. bell-like flowers.

136. **Use.** See line 67.

138. **Swart-star**, i. e. the dog-star.

142. **Rathe.** This positive has died out of familiar use, but the comparative remains in *rather* = earlier, sooner. It appears from the manuscript of the poem, preserved at Cambridge, that this passage enumerating the flowers was an afterthought, and elaborated by Milton with great care.

- The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
 The white pink, and the pansy freakt with jet,
 145 The glowing violet,
 The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,
 With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
 And every flower that sad embroidery wears :
 Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
 150 And daffodillies fill their cups with tears,
 To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.
 For so, to interpose a little ease,
 Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
 Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding
 seas
 155 Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
 Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
 Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
 Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world ;
 Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
 160 Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
 Where the great vision of the guarded mount
 Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold ;
 Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth,
 And, O ye dolphins, waft the haples youth.
 165 Weep no more, woful Shepherds, weep no more,

143. **Crow-toe** hardly sounds as natural to us ■ crow-foot.

151. **Hearse** = tomb.

158. **Monstrous world** = world of monsters.

160. **Bellerus** was an old Cornish giant.

161. **The guarded mount** is St. Michael's mount on the coast of Cornwall.

162. **Namancos** and **Bayona** stand for a tower and castle in Spain.

163. **Angel**, i. e. St. Michael.

165. The poet rises above the thought of the dead body, washed hither and thither by the waves, to the imperishable spirit.

For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
 Sunk though he be beneath the wat'ry floor;
 So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
 170 And tricks his beams, and with new spangled ore
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky.
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
 Thro' the dear might of him that walk'd the waves,
 Where other groves, and other streams along,
 175 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
 And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
 In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
 There entertain him all the saints above,
 In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
 180 That sing, and singing in their glory move,
 And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
 Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
 Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
 In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
 185 To all that wander in that perilous flood.
 (Thus sang the uncouth swain to th' oaks and rills,
 While the still morn went out with sandals gray:
 He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
 With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
 190 And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
 And now was dropt into the western bay.
 At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blew:
 To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.)

168. Day-star = sun. "Till thy day-star from on high visit me."

186. Milton here speaks in his own voice, not in that of the feigned shepherd.

190. Stretch'd out all the hills, i. e. made long shadows.

193. A line often misquoted, *fields* being read for *woods*. Milton was on the eve of his departure for Italy.

SONNETS.

I. ON HIS BEING ARRIVED TO THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
5 Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arriv'd so near,
And inward ripenes doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits indu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
10 It shall be still in strictest measure ev'n
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of
Heaven.
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great task-master's eye.

II. TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.

Addressed to Sir Thomas Fairfax at the siege of Colchester, 1648.

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings,
■ Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
Victory home, though new rebellions raise

Their Hydra heads, and the false North displays
Her broken league to imp their serpent wings.

O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,

10 (For what can war, but endless war still breed?)

Till truth and right from violence be freed,
And public faith clear'd from the shameful brand
Of public fraud. (In vain doth valour bleed,
While avarice and rapine share the land.)

III. TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

(CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast
plough'd,

5 And on the neck of crowned fortune proud
Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued,

While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots im-
brued,

And Dunbar field, resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much re-
mains

10 To conquer still; peace hath her victories
No less renown'd than war: new foes arise

Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains:

7. A reaction had come in the Civil War, and the Scotch declared for the king; insurrections were also springing up in Wales, in Kent, and in London itself. This was shortly before the final success of Cromwell.

2. Written in 1652.

8. The battle of Dunbar was fought September 3, 1650.

9 The battle of Worcester was ■ year later to a day. It was the crowning success of the Parliamentary army.

Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.)

IV. TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER.

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
Than whom a better senator ne'er held
The helm of Rome, when gowns not arms re-
pell'd
The fierce Epirot and the African bold,
5 Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
The drift of hollow states, hard to be spell'd,
Then to advise how war may best, upheld,
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage : besides to know
10 Both spiritual pow'r and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou hast learn't, which few
have done :
The bounds of either sword to thee we owe :
Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

V. ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEMONTE.

(AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose
bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold ;

1. Vane was forty years old when the sonnet was addressed to him, and one of the most active men in the councils of the Commonwealth. Fifteen years before he had been a resident in Massachusetts. He was an eager, restless man, of high ideals and noble belief in tolerance.

10. In this sonnet and that to Cromwell, Milton gives voice to his strong plea for the separation of Church and State.

14. There may be a distant reference here to the term "eldest son of the Church" used of the King of Spain.

1. In January, 1655, the Turin government issued an edict

- Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
 When all our fathers worship't stocks and stones,
 ■ Forget not: in thy book record their groans
 Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
 Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
 Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
 The vales redoubl'd to the hills, and they
 10 To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
 O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
 The triple tyrant; that from these may grow
 A hunder'd fold, who having learnt thy way
 Early may fly the Babylonian woe.)

VI. ON HIS BLINDNESS.

- (WHEN I consider how my light is spent
 Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
 And that one talent which is death to hide,
 Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
 ■ To serve therewith my Maker, and present
 My true account, lest he returning chide;
 "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
 I fondly ask: But Patience, to prevent
 That murmur, soon replies, "God doth not need
 10 Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
 Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
 Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
 And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
 They also serve who only stand and wait."

that the inhabitants of the Piedmont valley, who had for generations held a faith not unlike that of Luther, should conform to the Catholic religion. Three months' time was given them under threat of expulsion. On the seventeenth of April soldiers were let loose on the people and a terrible massacre followed.

13. *Hunder'd.* An interesting form in view of the familiar pronunciation.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES FOR CAREFUL STUDY.

NOTE TO THE TEACHER.

The following notes are the result of an experience of some years in answering questions of detail, and clearing up difficulties of interpretation, which arose in actual class-room study of these poems. It is hoped, however, that no information or comment here offered will prove superfluous or impertinent. Certainly any method of annotation which relieves the student of the duty of "looking up things" in the ordinary reference-books, or supplants intelligent exposition on the part of the teacher, is undesirable. The meaning of certain words has been suggested, mainly by reference to well-known passages in Milton and Shakespeare, but occasionally by definition. These are, as a rule, words which are now in common use, but which had a different meaning in Milton's day. Otherwise the notes aim mainly to treat the larger questions of Milton's method.

No other English poet, except Shakespeare, was so perfectly master of metrical forms as Milton. This means, of course, that his art is too subtle to be thoroughly analyzed in an elementary class, but it means also that it is too important an element of his power as a poet to be ignored. In these notes occasion is taken now and then to call attention to some of the simpler ways in which he varies metre to suggest not only the general character of his theme, but the flexibility of mood and shifting of atmosphere which belong to lyrical poetry.

For the rest, sufficient analysis of the structure of the poems may be here offered to help the student toward feeling that the poet is producing sense as well as poetry; that Milton, with all his condensation and his omission of connecting links, really has something straightforward and connected to say or sing, and is not merely making figurative remarks at random in verse.

L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO.

These poems must be read together, to be read intelligently. They were written shortly after Milton left the university, probably at some time during the years which he spent in the country, upon his father's estate at Horton. It must be understood very clearly, in order to get into the spirit of the companion poems, that the young Milton did not suppose himself to be describing the lives of two totally different human types, — a jolly fellow and a gloomy fellow. He was not, indeed, describing two persons at all, but two moods, and those the moods of such a person as he was, in such surroundings as his were, when the poems were written. The central figure in both poems is the same young Milton, a rather quiet, bookish person leading his quiet, bookish life, at a gentleman's country-seat. These two delightful poems, then, are simply ideal descriptions of two sorts of pleasant day in the country, which in two different moods the poet has himself enjoyed.

In the earlier mood he is not jovial, but cheerful, buoyant, easily pleased with the surface of the present life which he sees about him and the past life with which his reading has filled his mind. In the later mood he is inclined to look deeper into present and past, and to look forward as well, not gloomily, but soberly. The earlier ideal is as far from uproarious mirth as the latter from despairing melancholy; in one case the poet is content to yield himself to the pleasant current of daily existence, in the other he is moved to ponder somewhat seriously upon its meaning.

The first day begins before dawn and ends at midnight; the second begins in the evening, at dusk, and ends at noon of the following day.

L'ALLEGRO.

It will be noticed that in *L'Allegro*, *Il Penseroso*, and *Lycidas*, Milton follows the custom of the classical poets in prefacing his poems with an invocation. In the first two poems, however, the invocation is preceded by a passage in precisely the contrary vein. The poet warns away the unsympathetic spirit before summoning the sympathetic one. In his lighter mood the spirit

of brooding pensiveness which he calls "melancholy" is really distasteful to him, just as in his graver mood the spirit of unthinking cheerfulness which he calls "mirth" is distasteful. With this in view, the contrast between the fanciful parentage ascribed to Mirth and Melancholy in the two poems is worth studying. Milton, here as always, is free to give to the Greek myths a turn of his own, as, indeed, the Greek poets themselves were in the habit of doing. To the classically trained audience for which he wrote, those myths afforded the simplest and most natural basis for figurative speech. Whatever the effect of the poet's classicism may be upon modern readers, his expression of it can hardly have seemed to his contemporaries in the least pedantic or forced.

Lines 1-10. The uneven measure of these lines suggests the sombreness of the theme; and the succession of rough consonants, especially the sharp aspirates and hissing sibilants of the fourth verse, contrasts strikingly with the tripping melody of the succeeding lines. The extreme of rapidity is attained in lines 25-35, in which there are only two tetrameters of the full eight syllables, the first (unaccented) syllable being omitted in the others. The airy flexibility which Milton gives the rest of the poem is due largely to the art with which he varies the line of eight syllables with the line of seven. As might be expected from the more serious tone of the poem, there are far fewer seven-syllable iambs in *Il Penseroso*.

5. **Uncouth.** The word apparently has here something of its original meaning, "unknown."

10. **Dark Cimmerian desert.** Homer mentions the Cimmerians (*Odyssey*, XI. 14) as a people dwelling upon the Eastern borders of the known world, "beyond the ocean-stream," in a land of perpetual darkness.

12. **Yclep'd.** In most editions spelled "yclept." An interesting survival of an Old English participial form, the *y* being a modification of the prefix *ge* which is still used in forming the German participle.

24. **Buxom.** This word has had a curious history. It originally meant flexible or yielding, then came to mean, as in this passage, graceful, and now commonly signifies a strapping comeliness.

27, 28. The student should be careful to get, by the use of a

dictionary, the precise distinction in meaning between **Quips** and **Cranks**, and between **Nods** and **Becks**.

41. At this point, though the transition is not marked even by a full stop at the end of the preceding line, begins the body of the poem, — the description of one kind of day in the country which the poet in his lighter mood finds enjoyable.

45. **Then to come.** It is, of course, the poet, not the lark, who comes to the window.

50, 51. It has always appeared to the editor that the movement of these lines (especially the jerky effect caused by the necessity of throwing back the accent on the first and third feet in line 51) pretty clearly suggests the rhythm of the call of the cock : —

■ Scátters the réar of dárknes thín,
Ánd to the stáck, ór the barn doór."

57. **Some time walking, not unseen.** Here the Cheerful Youth evidently leaves the house, to spend the morning in strolling about the country-side, "not unseen;" that is, with a quiet pleasure in the nearness of the country people.

80. **Cynosure.** The Greek name for the constellation of the Lesser Bear, which contains the pole-star, by which Phœnician sailors steered.

81. **Hard by a cottage chimney smokes.** The interval from noon to late afternoon (line 91) is passed over somewhat rapidly.

98. **Sunshine holyday.** The phrase is repeated in *Comus*, 959.

102-114. **Faery Mab.** Friar Rush, or Will o' the Wisp (104), and Robin Goodfellow (105-114), were the three principal figures among the mischievous sprites of early English folklore. The type is suggested in Shakespeare by Puck rather than by the more delicate conceptions, Oberon and Titania (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), or Ariel (*The Tempest*).

117. **Towred cities please us then.** The country people have gone to bed (it is perhaps half-past eight or nine o'clock), but the Cheerful Youth is loath to end his happy day, and spends the next few hours in reading of a lighter sort. This reading is chosen from: 1. Romances, mainly metrical (117-124); 2. Masques (125-130); 3. Comedy (131-134).

132. **Jonson's learned sock.** The "sock," or low-heeled

shoe, was worn by Greek actors in playing comedy, as the "buskin," or high-heeled boot, was worn in playing tragedy. (See *Il Penseroso*, 102.)

135-144. Here, in imagining the sort of music which fits his cheerful mood, the poet seems to waive the special circumstances of his rural surroundings; unless it is himself that plays and sings.

145-150. The story of Orpheus was one of Milton's favorite myths. See *Il Penseroso*, 105-108; *Lycidas*, 58-63.

IL PENSEROSO.

It is evident from the outset that this poem presents an exact parallel to *L'Allegro*, except for the facts that it is somewhat longer, and that a brief passage at the end expressing aspiration has no counterpart in *L'Allegro*.

3. **Bested** = avail.

10. The student should be sure that he understands **pensioner** and **train**.

14. **To hit the sense** = to suit the powers.

30. **No fear of Jove**. Saturn was ousted from the throne of heaven by Jove, or Zeus.

42. **Forget thyself to marble**. Milton had written, a year or two before, in the lines on Shakespeare, —

"Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving."

51-54. **Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne**, etc. "A daring use," says Masson, "of the great vision of Ezekiel, chap. x., of the sapphire throne, the wheels of which were four cherubs, each wheel or cherub full of eyes, all over, while in the midst of them, and underneath the throne, was a burning fire. Milton, whether on any hint from previous Biblical commentators I know not, ventures to *name* one of these cherubs who guides the fiery wheelings of the visionary throne. He is the cherub *Contemplation*. It was by the serene faculty named Contemplation that one attained the clearest notions of divine things — mounted, as it were, into the very blaze of the Eternal."

56. **'Less Philomel**, etc. Here, with the song of the nightingale, the body of the poem begins.

57. **Plight.** Most editors take this to mean "mood," though it may possibly mean "strain."

59. **While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke.** This passage has sometimes been interpreted to mean that the moon actually stops to hear the song of the nightingale; but "check" may properly mean "control," with perhaps some fanciful notion of a slackening of pace.

61, 62. The beauty of this couplet depends upon the subtle modulation of the second line: the alliterative sound, the necessary loitering of the voice in pronouncing "most," and the sudden acceleration at the end, the last two syllables of "melancholy" being of course uttered very lightly.

65. **Walk unseen.** The Pensive youth prefers absolute solitude. Contrast *L'Allegro*, 57.

76. **Swinging slow with sullen roar.** This line seems to refer to the sound of the sea breaking upon "some wide-water'd shore" rather than to the sound of the bell itself.

78. *L'Allegro* enjoyed the merry group of peasants gathered about a bright hearth; *Il Penseroso* muses alone over a smouldering fire in a shadowy room.

94. According to the ancients the four universal elements were earth, air, fire, and water, under control respectively of gnomes, sylphs, salamanders, and nymphs — the dæmons or spirits here alluded to.

97. Instead of reading comedies written by his own contemporaries (*L'Allegro*, 131-134), the poet in his grave mood pores over the tragedies of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

131. The coming of dawn is the signal for the poet to seek the shadows of the forest, there to sleep for a time, still haunted by mysterious dreams, echoes of his waking thoughts.

170. **Rightly spell** = interpret properly.

COMUS.

We read *Comus* as poetry now, but it was originally written as the "book" of what we should now call a "musical spectacle," and what was then called a "masque." Its purely dramatic quality is very slight, or rather elementary. Like other masques, it makes little pretence of creating characters, gets on without the rapid give-and-take of genuine human dialogue, and

depends upon "situation" for whatever dramatic effect is achieved. *Comus* is, as a poem, didactic rather than dramatic or lyrical. The Lady has no distinct human personality, and the two Brothers differ merely as types. Considered as persons they would all be, we must admit, a little tiresome, but as figures in an allegory they have a fitness and even a beauty of their own. That allegory we might call "The Triumph of Purity."

Metrically the poem is very interesting. The more serious portions of the narration and dialogues are as a rule in blank verse, the lighter in rhymed tetrameters; and as usual Milton employs each of these forms so flexibly as to convey the impression of subtle changes of mood by means of subtle modulations of metre.

10. **This mortal change.** This phase of mortal life, which the immortal spirit undergoes. Milton, like Wordsworth (*Ode on Intimations of Immortality*), evidently conceived of immortality as reaching indefinitely into the past as well as into the future. Compare "immortal change," line 841.

60. **The Celtic and Iberian fields.** By this account *Comus* made his way northward from the Mediterranean through Spain and France, across the Channel to Britain and the Welsh forest in which the action takes place.

65. **Orient.** Does this adjective allude to flavor or color? Compare *Paradise Lost*, I. 546.

66. What is the metrical peculiarity of this line?

68. What is the difference between the effect of *Comus's* enchantment and that of his mother *Circe* as described in the *Odyssey*? What practical advantage did Milton gain by so limiting the effect of the draught?

73. **Misery.** Not "unhappiness," but "wretchedness," "degradation."

88. **Nor of lesse faith** = "and not less faithful as a servant than skillful as a musician."

93. The blank verse, which has been best fitted for the measured and serious character of the long introductory speech of the Guardian Spirit, now, with the entrance of *Comus* and his revelling crew, breaks into the rhymed tetrameter which has become familiar in *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*. This holds until line 115, when the movement becomes more irregular. How does this irregularity add to the effectiveness of the next twenty lines?

112. Does the word **quire** here suggest "the music of the spheres"? or does it mean simply "company"?

139. **Nice** is ironical; what does it mean? Is **descry** (141) used in the modern sense?

144. **The Measure**. Here, in the actual production of the masque, some minutes must have been occupied by the dancing of the first ballet in this half-poetic, half-spectacular "production."

153, 154. **Thus I hurl**, etc. Evidently these words are accompanied by some sort of gesture, probably followed by the simple stage device of a diffused light thrown about the person of Comus. The change in his appearance which this "magic dust" effects is a convenient form of disguise. He still retains his picturesqueness in the eyes of the audience, and is as little recognizable to the Lady as if he had actually put on the clothing of a villager—a shift which the attendant spirit has already adopted. It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that the "silver lining" of the "sable cloud" which the Lady sees later is the distant light of Comus's "dazzling spell."

157. Is **quaint** used in the ordinary modern sense?

177. What is the force of **amiss**?

194. **Envious** = malicious.

230. The song to Echo owes much of its beauty as poetry to the remarkable flexibility of its metrical form. Its iambic measure varies from dimeter to hexameter, and its rhymes fall irregularly.

269. **Every bleak unkindly fog**. Compare *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II. i. 88-90.

286. **How easy my misfortune is to hit**. The Lady is a little impatient of this stupid countryman's comments, and speaks ironically.

297-302. **Their port was more than human**. These lines contain a courtly compliment to the two sons of the house of Bridgewater, who are almost immediately to appear before the audience.

299. **The element**. Compare *Twelfth Night*, Act I. Sc. i. 26.

302. An oddly irregular verse, the pause at the semicolon falling between the two unaccented syllables of an anapestic foot.

325. **Courts of princes**, etc. Compare *The Faëry Queen*, Book VI. Canto i. 2.

331-479. The long dialogue between the two Brothers which follows would be quite out of place in a play. The tone of their speeches is declamatory rather than dramatic. See the Introductory Note to *Comus*.

349. **Innumeros** = innumerable. Compare "unexpressive," *Lycidas*, 176.

402. **Single**. Compare 369.

426. **Mountaineer**. The word has frequently a bad sense in Milton and Shakespeare. See *Cymbeline*, Act IV. Sc. ii. 71 and 120.

426. What is the force of **very** in this line?

438-449. Again it is necessary to remember that not only Milton, but the audience for which he was writing, was saturated with classical learning. The passage which follows is therefore not more pedantic than the preceding allusions to English superstitions.

490. Professor Masson says, "A stage-direction, printed in Lawes's edition of 1637, but omitted in Milton's editions, ought to have been retained: '*He hallos*; the Guardian Dæmon hallos again, and enters in the habit of a Shepherd.'"

495-512. **Thyrsis** has been spoken of as a pastoral singer, and in consequence these lines are cast in the rhymed couplets which were the favorite form in English pastoral poetry.

530. **Character'd**. What was the original meaning of the word? How is it accented here? Compare *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. ii. :

"And these few precepts in thy memory
See thou character."

558. **Was took**. Compare *A Winter's Tale*, Act IV. Sc. iv. 118-120:

"Daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty."

599. What is the metrical peculiarity of this line?

607. **Purchase** is used in its older sense.

633. An odd line, metrically:

"Bóre a bright gólden flówer, but nót in thís soil."

638. **Hæmony**. Hæmonia was an old name for Thessaly, especially the land of magic with the Greeks. (Masson.)

655. Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke. See *Æneid*, Book VIII. 251-253.

660. Used in the old sense, which is still retained in our phrase "a nervous style."

675, 676. That *Nepenthes*, etc. In the *Odyssey* Helen gives to her husband Menelaus, mixed with his wine, an opiate which she had obtained from Polydamnia, the wife of Thone. It was called *nepenthes* ("pain-dispelling"), and was of wonderful virtue. (Masson.)

707. Those budge doctors of the Stoic fur. A "budge-gown" was a furred gown indicating a certain academic rank in the English university; budge also meant "portly."

733. The deep. The reading of an early manuscript, "would so bestud the centre with their starlight" ("centre" meaning "centre of the earth"), makes it fairly clear that *deep* here means "depths of the earth." The phrase "those below," therefore, would refer to the gnomes and other supernatural creatures who were supposed to dwell within the earth.

750. Grain = color. Compare *Il Penseroso*, 33.

779. In únsupérfluóús éven propórtion.

780-799. These lines present the doctrine which constitutes the motive of the masque, and which have already been expressed by the Elder Brother (see lines 420-475).

841. Immortal change. Compare line 10.

852. Who is the old swain here mentioned?

868-880. The proper names in this passage should be looked up in a classical dictionary.

922, 923. *Locrine* was by tradition the eldest son of the Trojan Brutus, who was fabled to be one of the first kings of Britain.

960, 961. Here be without duck or nod, etc. The song is preceded by a rustic ballet, which is followed almost immediately by a court ballet; after which comes the Epilogue, spoken by the attendant Spirit.

976-979. The opening lines of this passage suggest the song of Ariel in *The Tempest*, Act V. Sc. i. 88-94. A large part of the Epilogue was adapted by Lawes and used for a prologue, in the actual production of the masque.

1021. *Spheary chime* = the planets. There are very many allusions in Shakespeare and Milton to the "music of the spheres," ■ harmony supposed to be given out by revolution of the spheres by which the planets were borne along.

LYCIDAS.

In metre and rhyme the poem is of unusual form. The pentameters are here and there varied by a trimeter or a tetrameter, and the rhyming is extremely irregular. There are, moreover, a considerable number of verses which have no rhyming equivalent. How effectively Milton employs this flexible measure may be easily seen by a little examination of the first fourteen lines of the poem. The first and thirteenth lines are blank; the second line ends in a sound which is repeated five times at irregular intervals; and three other rhyme-words, "crude" "due," and "prime," are matched in subsequent verses.

1-5. **Yet once more**, etc. After writing *L'Allegro* and *Il Penseroso*, Milton is supposed to have determined to write no more poetry till his powers should have fully matured. Some years later, however, he had been persuaded to write the masque of *Comus*, to accompany the music of his friend Lawes; and now, "yet once more," the death of his friend King forces him to sing "before the mellowing year;" that is before his powers have fairly ripened. Wreaths of laurel, myrtle, and ivy were the rewards of poetic skill among the Greeks; hence the figure.

23-36. **For we were nurst**, etc. Here the poem really begins with a reminiscence of the intimacy which had existed between the young poets. By *Fauns* and *Satyrs* are probably meant the undergraduates who were pleased with the versifying of the two friends.

37-49. After recalling his former happiness, the poet begins his lament with a simple expression of his grief and sense of loss.

50-63. These lines express the feeling of wonder which often accompanies a first grief. "How could this have been permitted?" the immediate answer being, "Death asks no permission; it comes to all."

64-76. Here grief verges upon despair, and the question arises, "What is the use of it all? Why, if a young life of such promise may be cut off before it has had a chance of fulfilment — why is it worth while to try for excellence?" This doubt can be only momentary in a healthy mind like Milton's; in the following lines (76-84) it is put to flight by the reflection that fame

worth having (that is, real success) depends not upon reputation, but upon merit.

67-69. **As others use.** Probably Milton is still speaking of the poetic art. The great Elizabethans were all dead; Ben Jonson, the last of them, died in the year 1637, when this poem was written. Poetry had now become a mere fashionable accomplishment, and the best that it could do was to produce dainty love-songs.

87. **That strain I heard,** etc. The poet confesses that the passage about Fame is not in the pure pastoral mood; to which he recalls himself by invoking the streams which were supposed to be haunted by the muses of Greek and Roman pastoral poetry.

88-110. In these lines Milton enumerates the chief mourners for Lycidas; that is, he suggests the different ways in which King is a loss to the world, — 1. Nature (90-102;) 2. The University, or the intellectual world (103-107); 3. The Church, or the religious world (108-112).

101. **Built in th' eclipse.** Compare *Macbeth*, Act IV., Sc. i., 28; *Hamlet*, Act I. Sc. i. 117.

113-131. The speech of St. Peter, expressing the concern which Milton felt as to the condition of the English clergy, is a more serious digression from the pastoral strain, though a most interesting passage to students of Milton. The passage of graceful description which follows is not found in the earliest version of the poem, and may have been introduced to aid the reader in recovering the pastoral mood.

152-164. To the grief of loss is added grief in not being able to pay the last honors to the dead.

165-185. After expressing the Christian's hope that Lycidas is now one of the heavenly choir, Milton suddenly and characteristically relapses (183) into paganism (a merely literary paganism, of course,) by imagining Lycidas the guardian spirit (*numen*) of the channel seas.

170. **Unexpressive.** Compare *As You Like It*, Act III. Sc. ii. 10.

"The fair, the chaste, and unexpressive she."

The Riverside Literature Series

PLAYS OF SHAKESPEARE

Merchant of Venice. (No. 55.) From the Riverside Shakespeare. Edited for School Use by SAMUEL THURBER, Master in the Girls' High School, Boston, Mass. Paper, 15 cents; linen, 25 cents.

Julius Cæsar. (No. 67.) From the Riverside Shakespeare. Furnished with additional Notes. Paper, 15 cents; linen, 25 cents.

Nos. 55 and 67 also in one volume, linen, 40 cents.

As You Like It. (No. 93.) From the Riverside Shakespeare. Furnished with Additional Notes. Paper, 15 cents; linen, 25 cents.

Macbeth. (No. 106.) From the Riverside Shakespeare. Edited for School Use by HELEN GRAY CONE, Tutor in Literature in the Normal College, New York, N. Y. Paper, 15 cents; linen, 25 cents.

Hamlet. (No. 116.) From the Riverside Shakespeare. Furnished with additional Notes by HELEN GRAY CONE. Paper, 30 cents; linen, 40 cents.

Twelfth Night. (No. 149.) Furnished with additional Notes by HELEN GRAY CONE. Paper, 15 cents; linen, 25 cents.

A Midsummer Night's Dream. (No. 153.) From the Riverside Shakespeare. With Introduction and Notes by LAURA EMMA LOCKWOOD, PH. D., Instructor in English in Wellesley College. Paper, 15 cents.

The Tempest. (No. 154.) From the Riverside Shakespeare. With Introduction and additional Notes by EDWARD EVERETT HALE, JR., PH. D., Professor of English Literature in Union College. Paper, 15 cents; linen, 25 cents.

CHARLES AND MARY LAMB'S

Tales from Shakespeare. (Nos. 64, 65, 66.) With an Introductory Sketch, Notes, and a Pronouncing Vocabulary. In three parts, paper, each, 15 cents. Also in one volume, linen, 50 cents.

PART I. (No. 64.)

Introductory Sketch. Preface.

The Tempest.

Midsummer-Night's Dream.

The Winter's Tale.

Much Ado about Nothing.

As You Like It.

The Two Gentlemen of Verona.

PART II. (No. 65.)

The Merchant of Venice.

Cymbeline.

King Lear.

Macbeth.

All's Well that Ends Well.

The Taming of the Shrew.

PART III. (No. 66.)

The Comedy of Errors.

Twelfth Night.

Timon of Athens.

Romeo and Juliet.

Hamlet.

Othello.

Vocabulary.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

4 Park St., Boston; 85 Fifth Ave., New York;

378-388 Wabash Avenue, Chicago.

ROLFE'S STUDENTS' SERIES

OF

STANDARD ENGLISH POEMS FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES.

This Series contains a number of classic English Poems, in a carefully revised Text, with copious explanatory and critical Notes, and numerous Illustrations. The various numbers of the Series are as follows : —

1. SCOTT'S LADY OF THE LAKE. With Map.
2. SCOTT'S MARMION. With Map.
3. SCOTT'S LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.
4. TENNYSON'S PRINCESS.
5. SELECT POEMS OF TENNYSON. *Revised Edition.* Containing The Lady of Shalott, The Miller's Daughter, Cenone, The Lotos-Eaters, The Palace of Art, A Dream of Fair Women, Morte d'Arthur, The Talking Oak, Locksley Hall, The Charge of the Light Brigade, The Brook, and the Wellington Ode, etc.
6. TENNYSON'S IN MEMORIAM.
7. TENNYSON'S ENOCH ARDEN, and Other Poems. *Revised Edition.* Including Lady Clara Vere de Vere, Tithonus, Rizpah, Freedom, The Golden Year, Mariana, Sea Dreams, Aylmer's Field, Mariana in the South, Locksley Hall Sixty Years After, etc.
8. TENNYSON'S COMING OF ARTHUR, and Other Idylls of the King. Containing The Dedication, The Coming of Arthur, Gareth and Lynette, The Marriage of Geraint, Geraint and Enid, Balin and Balan, Merlin and Vivien.
9. TENNYSON'S LANCELOT AND ELAINE, and Other Idylls of the King. This volume contains the rest of the Idylls of the King : Lancelot and Elaine, The Holy Grail, Pelleas and Ettarre, The Last Tournament, Guinevere, The Passing of Arthur ; and the concluding Address to the Queen.
- (8 and 9.) TENNYSON'S IDYLLS OF THE KING. Complete in one volume, \$1.00.
10. BYRON'S CHILDE HAROLD.
11. MORRIS'S ATALANTA'S RACE, and Other Tales from the Earthly Paradise.

Each volume, 75 cents ; to teachers, for examination, 53 cents

A descriptive circular sent on application.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY,

4 PARK STREET, BOSTON ; 85 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
378-388 WABASH AVENUE, CHICAGO

LITERATURE FOR ALL GRADES

THE RIVERSIDE LITERATURE SERIES

One hundred and seventy-seven numbers already published, containing masterpieces from the writings of the greatest authors of America and Great Britain.

With Introductions, Portraits, Biographical Sketches, and Notes. Adapted for use in all grades in Primary, Grammar, and High Schools. Single numbers, paper, 15 cents each, *net*, postpaid.

STUDENTS' SERIES OF STANDARD POETRY

For Schools and Colleges. Edited by W. J. ROLFE, Litt. D. A carefully revised Text; copious explanatory and critical Notes; numerous illustrations.

Eleven volumes from Scott, Tennyson, Byron, and Morris. Each volume, to teachers, cloth, 53 cents, *net*, postpaid.

MASTERPIECES OF AMERICAN LITERATURE

Complete Prose and Poetical Selections from the works of Irving, Bryant, Franklin, Holmes, Hawthorne, Whittier, Thoreau, O'Reilly, Lowell, Emerson, Webster, Everett, Longfellow, and Poe, with a Portrait and Biographical Sketch of each Author.

Edited by HORACE E. SCUDDER. Adapted for use in Grammar Schools, High Schools, and Academies, as a Reading Book, and as a Text-Book in American Literature. Cloth, \$1.00, *net*, postpaid.

MASTERPIECES OF BRITISH LITERATURE

Complete Prose and Poetical Selections from the works of Ruskin, Macaulay, Dr. John Brown, Tennyson, Dickens, Wordsworth, Burns, Lamb, Coleridge, Byron, Cowper, Gray, Goldsmith, Addison, Steele, Milton, Bacon, with a Portrait and Biographical Sketch of each Author.

Edited by HORACE E. SCUDDER. Adapted for use in Grammar Schools, High Schools, and Academies, as a Reading Book, and as a Text-Book in English Literature. Cloth, \$1.00, *net*, postpaid.

AMERICAN POEMS

Selected from the works of Longfellow, Whittier, Bryant, Holmes, Lowell, and Emerson.

Edited by HORACE E. SCUDDER. With Biographical Sketches and Notes. Cloth, \$1.00, *net*, postpaid.

AMERICAN PROSE

Complete Selections from the writings of Hawthorne, Irving, Longfellow, Whittier, Holmes, Lowell, Thoreau, and Emerson.

Edited by HORACE E. SCUDDER. With Introduction and Notes. Cloth, \$1.00, *net*, postpaid.

MODERN CLASSICS

A School Library for \$11.56. Thirty-four volumes. Cloth, each, 40 cents, postpaid.

"An unrivaled list of excellent works."—Dr. W. T. HARRIS, *U. S. Commissioner of Education*.

Descriptive Circulars containing the Tables of Contents of each volume of the Series mentioned above will be sent upon application.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY

4 PARK ST., BOSTON; 85 FIFTH AVE., NEW YORK

378-388 WABASH AVE., CHICAGO.

The Riverside Literature Series — Continued

74. Gray's Elegy, etc.; Cowper's John Gilpin, etc.
75. Scudder's George Washington. §
76. Wordsworth's On the Intimations of Immortality, and Other Poems.
77. Burns's Cotter's Saturday Night, and Other Poems.*
78. Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield. §
79. Lamb's Old China, and Other Essays of Elia
80. Coleridge's Rime of the Ancient Mariner, etc.; Campbell's Lochiel's Warning, etc.*
81. Holmes's Autocrat of the Breakfast-Table. §§
82. Hawthorne's Twice-Told Tales. §§§
83. George Eliot's Silas Marner. §
84. Dana's Two Years Before the Mast. §§§
85. Hughes's Tom Brown's School Days. §§
86. Scott's Ivanhoe. §§§
87. Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. §§§
88. Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin. §§§
89. Swift's Gulliver's Voyage to Lilliput.**
90. Swift's Gulliver's Voyage to Brobdingnag.**
91. Hawthorne's House of the Seven Gables. §§§
92. Burroughs's A Bunch of Herbs, and Other Papers.
93. Shakespeare's As You Like It.**
94. Milton's Paradise Lost. Books I.-III.**
- 95, 96, 97, 98. Cooper's Last of the Mohicans. In four parts.
(The four parts also bound in one volume, linen, 60 cents.)
99. Tennyson's Coming of Arthur, and Other Idylls of the King.
100. Burke's Conciliation with the Colonies. ROBERT ANDERSEN, A. M.*
101. Homer's Iliad. Books I., VI., XXII., and XXIV. POPE.*
102. Macaulay's Essays on Johnson and Goldsmith.*
103. Macaulay's Essay on Milton.***
104. Macaulay's Life and Writings of Addison.***
Nos. 102, 103, and 104 are edited by WILLIAM P. TRENT
105. Carlyle's Essay on Burns. GEORGE R. NOYES.*
106. Shakespeare's Macbeth. RICHARD GRANT WHITE, and HELEN GRAY CONE.* **
- 107, 108. Grimm's Household Tales. In two parts. ‡
109. Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. W. V. MOODY. §
110. De Quincey's Flight of a Tartar Tribe. MILTON HAIGHT TURK.*
111. Tennyson's Princess. ROLFE. (Double Number, 30 cents. Also, in Rolfe's Students' Series, cloth, to Teachers, 53 cents.)
112. Virgil's Æneid. Books I.-III. Translated by CRANCH.
113. Poems from the Writings of Ralph Waldo Emerson. GEORGE H. BROWNE.**
114. Old Greek Folk Stories. JOSEPHINE PRESTON PEABODY.*
115. Browning's Pied Piper of Hamelin, and Other Poems.
116. Shakespeare's Hamlet. RICHARD GRANT WHITE and HELEN GRAY CONE. §
- 117, 118. Stories from the Arabian Nights. In two parts. ‡
119. Poe's Raven, The Fall of the House of Usher, etc.**
120. Poe's Gold-Bug, The Purloined Letter, and Other Tales.**
Nos. 119, 120 are edited by WILLIAM P. TRENT.
121. The Great Debate: Hayne's Speech.**
122. The Great Debate: Webster's Reply to Hayne.**
Nos. 121, 122 are edited by LINDSAY SWIFT.
123. Lowell's Democracy, and Other Papers.**
124. Aldrich's Baby Bell, The Little Violinist, etc.
125. Dryden's Palamon and Arcite. ARTHUR GILMAN.*
126. Ruskin's King of the Golden River: Wonder Stories, by Others.*
127. Keats's Ode on a Grecian Urn, The Eve of St. Agnes, etc.
128. Byron's Prisoner of Chillon, and Other Poems.
129. Plato's The Judgment of Socrates: being The Apology, Crito, and the Closing Scene of Phædo. Translated by PAUL E. MORE.
130. Emerson's The Superlative, and Other Essays.
131. Emerson's Nature, and Compensation. Edited by EDWARD W. EMERSON.
132. Arnold's Sohrab and Rustum, etc. LOUISE IMOGEN GUINEY.*
133. Carl Schurz's Abraham Lincoln.**
134. Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel. ROLFE. (Double Number, 30 cents. Also in Rolfe's Students' Series, cloth, to Teachers, 53 cents.)
- 135, 136. Chaucer's Prologue, The Knight's Tale, and The Nun's Priest's Tale. [135] Introduction, and The Prologue. [136.] The Knight's Tale, and The Nun's Priest's Tale. FRANK J. MATHER, JR.**

For explanation of signs see end of list.

The Riverside Literature Series — Continued

137. Homer's Iliad. Books I., VI., XXII., and XXIV. Translated by BRYANT.
138. Hawthorne's The Custom House, and Main Street.
139. Howells's Doorstep Acquaintance, and Other Sketches.
140. Thackeray's Henry Esmond. (*Quintuple No.*) Pa., 60 cts.; linen, 75 cts.
141. Three Outdoor Papers, by T. W. HIGGINSON.
142. Ruskin's Sesame and Lilies: 1. Of Kings' Treasuries; 2. Of Queens' Gardens.*
143. Plutarch's Life of Alexander the Great. *North's Translation.*
144. Scudder's Book of Legends.*
145. Hawthorne's Gentle Boy, and Other Tales.
146. Longfellow's Giles Corey of the Salem Farms.
147. Pope's Rape of the Lock, and Other Poems. HENRY W. BOYNTON.
148. Hawthorne's Marble Faun. ANNIE RUSSELL MARBLE. \$\$\$
149. Shakespeare's Twelfth Night. R. G. WHITE and HELEN GRAY CONE.*
150. Ouida's A Dog of Flanders, and The Nürnberg Stove.*
151. Mrs. Ewing's Jackanapes, and The Brownies.* H. W. BOYNTON.
152. Martineau's Peasant and Prince. § H. W. BOYNTON.
153. Shakespeare's Midsummer-Night's Dream. LAURA E. LOCKWOOD.
154. Shakespeare's Tempest. R. G. WHITE and E. E. HALE, JR.*
155. Irving's Life of Goldsmith. WILLIS BOUGHTON. §§.
156. Tennyson's Gareth and Lynette, Lancelot and Elaine, The Passing of Arthur.*
157. The Song of Roland. Translated by ISABEL BUTLER. §
158. Merlin, and Sir Balin. Books I. and II. From Malory's King Arthur C. G. CHILD.*
159. Beowulf. C. G. CHILD.*
160. Spenser's Faerie Queene. Book I. §

EXTRA NUMBERS

- A American Authors and their Birthdays. By A. S. ROE.
- B Portraits and Biographies of Twenty American Authors.
- C A Longfellow Night. For Catholic Schools and Societies.
- D Literature in School. Essays by HORACE E. SCUDDER.
- E Harriet Beecher Stowe. Dialogues and Scenes.
- F Longfellow Leaflets.
- G Whittier Leaflets. } Each a *Double Number*, 30 cents; linen, 40 cents.
- H Holmes Leaflets. } Poems and Prose Passages for Reading and Recitation.
- O Lowell Leaflets. }
- I The Riverside Primary Reading Manual for Teachers. By I. F. HALL.
- K The Riverside Primer and Reader. 25 cents; linen, 30 cents.
- L The Riverside Song Book. 120 Classic American Poems set to Standard Music. (*Double Number*, 30 cents; boards, 40 cents.)
- M Lowell's Fable for Critics. (*Double Number*, 30 cents.)
- N Selections from the Writings of Eleven American Authors.
- P The Hiawatha Primer. (*Special Number*.) A First Book in Reading. By FLORENCE HOLBROOK. Cloth only, 40 cents.
- V The Book of Nature Myths. (*Special Number*.) A Second Book in Reading, to follow the Hiawatha Primer. By FLORENCE HOLBROOK. Cloth only, 45 cents.
- Q Selections from the Writings of Eleven English Authors.
- R Hawthorne's Selected Twice-Told Tales. N. Y. Regents' Requirements. Paper, 20 cents; linen, 30 cents.
- S Irving's Selected Essays from the Sketch Book. N. Y. Regents' Requirements. (*Double Number*, 30 cents; linen, 40 cents.)
- T Emerson's Nature; Lowell's My Garden Acquaintance. N. Y. Regents' Requirements.
- U A Dramatization of Longfellow's Song of Hiawatha. By FLORENCE HOLBROOK.
- W Brown's In the Days of Giants. Cloth only, 50 cents.
- X Poems for the Study of Language. Illinois Course §

Also, bound in linen: * 25 cents. ** 4 and 5, in one vol., 40 cents; likewise 6 and 31, 11 and 63, 28 and 361, 29 and 10, 30 and 15, 32 and 133, 39 and 123, 40 and 69, 42 and 113, 55 and 67, 57 and 58, 70 and 71, 72 and 94, 103 and 104, 119 and 120, 121 and 122. † Also in one vol., 40 cents. ‡ 1, 4, and 30 also in one vol., 50 cents; likewise 7, 8, and 9; 23, 37, and 27; 33, 34, and 35; 64, 65, and 66. § *Double Number*, paper, 30 cents; linen, 40 cents. §§ *Triple Number*, paper, 45 cents; linen, 50 cents. \$\$\$ *Quadruple Number*, paper, 50 cents; linen, 60 cents.

HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY